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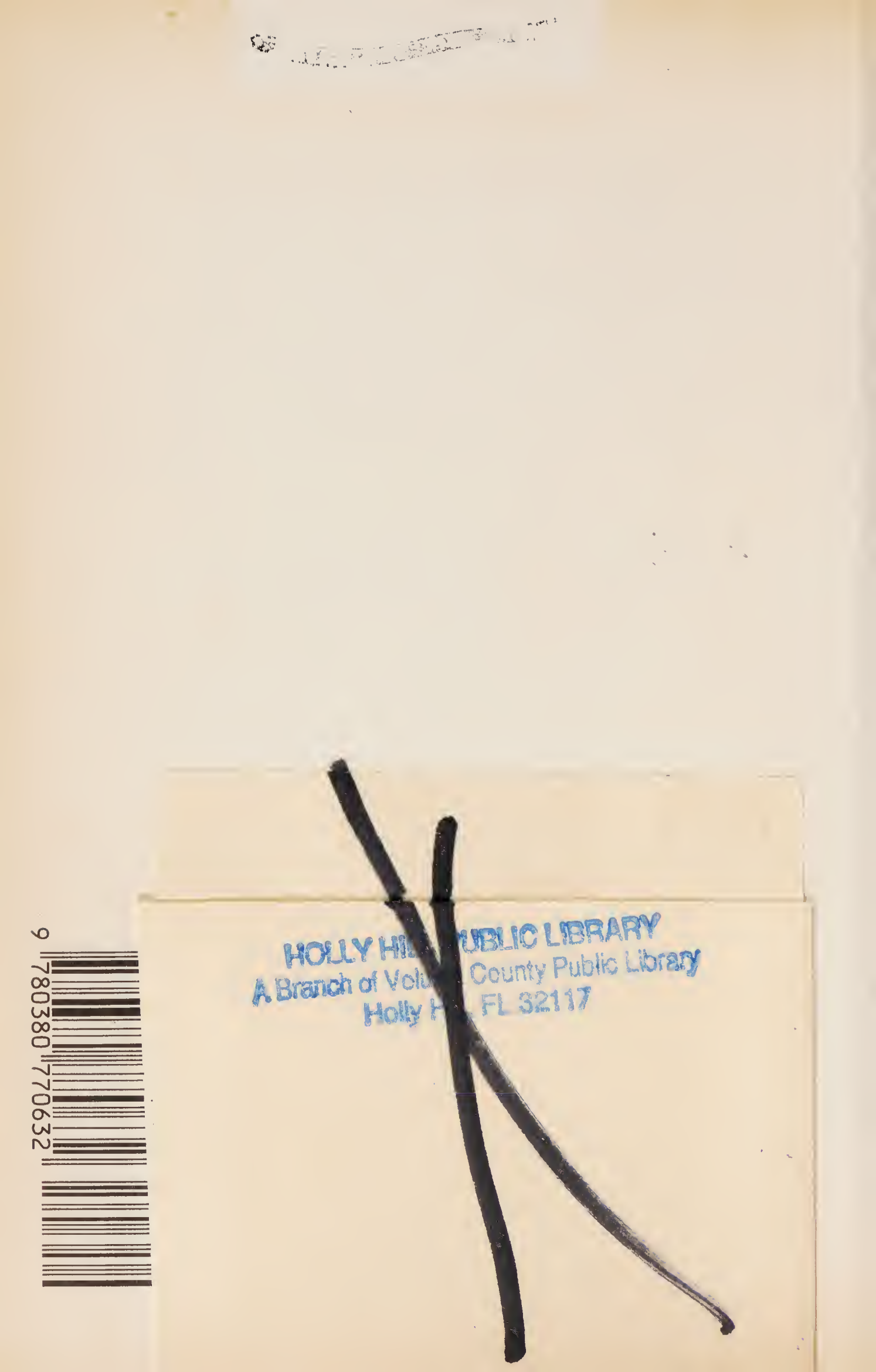
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Young "Jack" Kennedy with several brothers and sisters in 1925. From left: Joe, Jr., JFK, Rosemary, Kathleen, and Eunice. (Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library)

That Day in Dallas

Friday, November 22, 1963, started out as a regular day for most people. But in Dallas, Texas, school let out early so that kids throughout the city might have a chance to see the President of the United States in person. Offices closed; people took longer lunch breaks. John F. Kennedy was due to arrive at Dallas's Love Field at 11:30 A.M.

It was a cloudy gray morning. "Please, don't let it rain . . ." was the thought in everyone's mind. Luckily, by midmorning a north wind cleared the air. The skies were sunny in Dallas when the sleek air transport, Air Force One, dropped its nose on the runway right on schedule. The crowds waved and cheered. The side of the blue-and-white plane was in full view. There were the words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA in broad letters. With a screech of brakes and a puff of smoke, Air Force One landed in Dallas.

The door of the aircraft opened and out stepped a smiling Jacqueline Kennedy, the First Lady. She

looked very glamorous in a strawberry pink suit with a purplish blue collar and a matching pillbox hat. Right behind her, in a dark bluish gray suit, was John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the youngest man ever to be elected President of the United States.

The President casually brushed a tuft of hair from his forehead. The crowd went wild. John Kennedy waved and flashed his winning smile. Cameras clicked madly as people tried to get a personal photo of this popular, if controversial, President. A line of Texas officials stood waiting to greet the honored couple. Dallas Mayor Earle Cabell was the first to shake hands with President Kennedy while Mrs. Kennedy was presented with a huge bouquet of red roses. Texas-born Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson and his wife, Ladybird, followed the Kennedys.

John Kennedy made his way through the thick crowd. He shook hands with Dallas citizens as he approached the limousine awaiting him. He walked ahead of the Secret Service men. Their job was to guard the President's life, even if it cost their own, but JFK was not an easy man to protect. He was known for his habit of mingling with his fellow Americans. More than once, Secret Service agents looked around, only to find that their President was not in sight! Once, he had ducked away from his guards to wheel a golf cart full of kids to a corner ice cream store.

Mrs. Kennedy, a graceful young woman of thirty-four, was the first to step into the rear seat of the long, midnight blue Lincoln convertible. She was followed by President Kennedy. Texas Gov-

Jubilant crowds greeting the President and First Lady at Love Field in Dallas that fateful day in November 1963.
(AP/Wide World Photos)

ernor John Connally sat in a jump seat in front of the Kennedys. He wore a ten-gallon white Stetson hat, a symbol of Texas. Mrs. Connally was beside him. Two Secret Service men sat in the front seat. A follow-up car filled with Secret Service rode behind the presidential limousine. Third in the motorcade came a car with Vice-President Johnson, Mrs. Johnson and Texas Senator and Mrs. Yarborough. The entire motorcade was surrounded by Dallas police and Texas Rangers on motorcycles.

The crowds in downtown Dallas were thick and

friendly. Men, women, and children of all ages and races waved and cheered. President Kennedy waved back, calling "Hi! How are you?" as the motorcade moved at a slow twelve miles per hour. Kennedy was so close to the crowds that each person felt as though he spoke to him or her personally. "Jack and Jackie," the affectionate nicknames for the presidential couple, seemed like old friends to the people of Dallas.

The eager reception was a relief to everyone. Several weeks earlier, United Nations Ambassador Adlai Stevenson had visited Dallas. But his welcome was far from warm. He had been jeered at by the crowds, spat on, and even struck with a picket sign. So on November 22 the eyes of the nation were on Dallas. Would this troubled city receive the President with respect? Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry warned the city over the radio to mind their manners.

Broadcasters following the procession announced, "There's no danger whatsoever. The President is getting an overwhelming welcome." It was now 11:50 A.M. The motorcade was approaching Dealey Plaza. The forty-five minute procession through Dallas was to end at the Trade Mart building. There, President Kennedy would address a crowd of 2,500 influential Texas business people and politicians. The staff at the Trade Mart was busy preparing a steak luncheon, but the thickest and juiciest steak was *not* set aside for the President—that would make it too easy for someone to poison his food. Waiters were instructed to serve the steaks randomly.

President Kennedy riding in his motorcade through Dallas only one minute before he was shot. Beside him is Mrs. Kennedy and in front of him sits Governor John Connally of Texas. (AP/Wide World Photos)

The microphone volume was adjusted on the speaker's podium. Two small boxed riding saddles sat right next to it. A Texas cowboy hat was on top of each one. These were gifts from Dallas to Kennedy's two children, Caroline and John, Jr.

Shortly after noon on November 22, 1963, the presidential motorcade headed west along Dallas's Main Street into Dealey Plaza. It turned north onto Houston street for one block and then made a hard left turn onto Elm Street. At the northwest corner of Houston and Elm stood the seven-story orange-brick Texas School Book Depository. At

12:30 the motorcade passed slowly in front of the building while the Dallas crowds cheered their President. Inside a gunman took aim. Mrs. Connally turned to John Kennedy and said, "You see, Mr. President? You can't say Dallas doesn't love you."

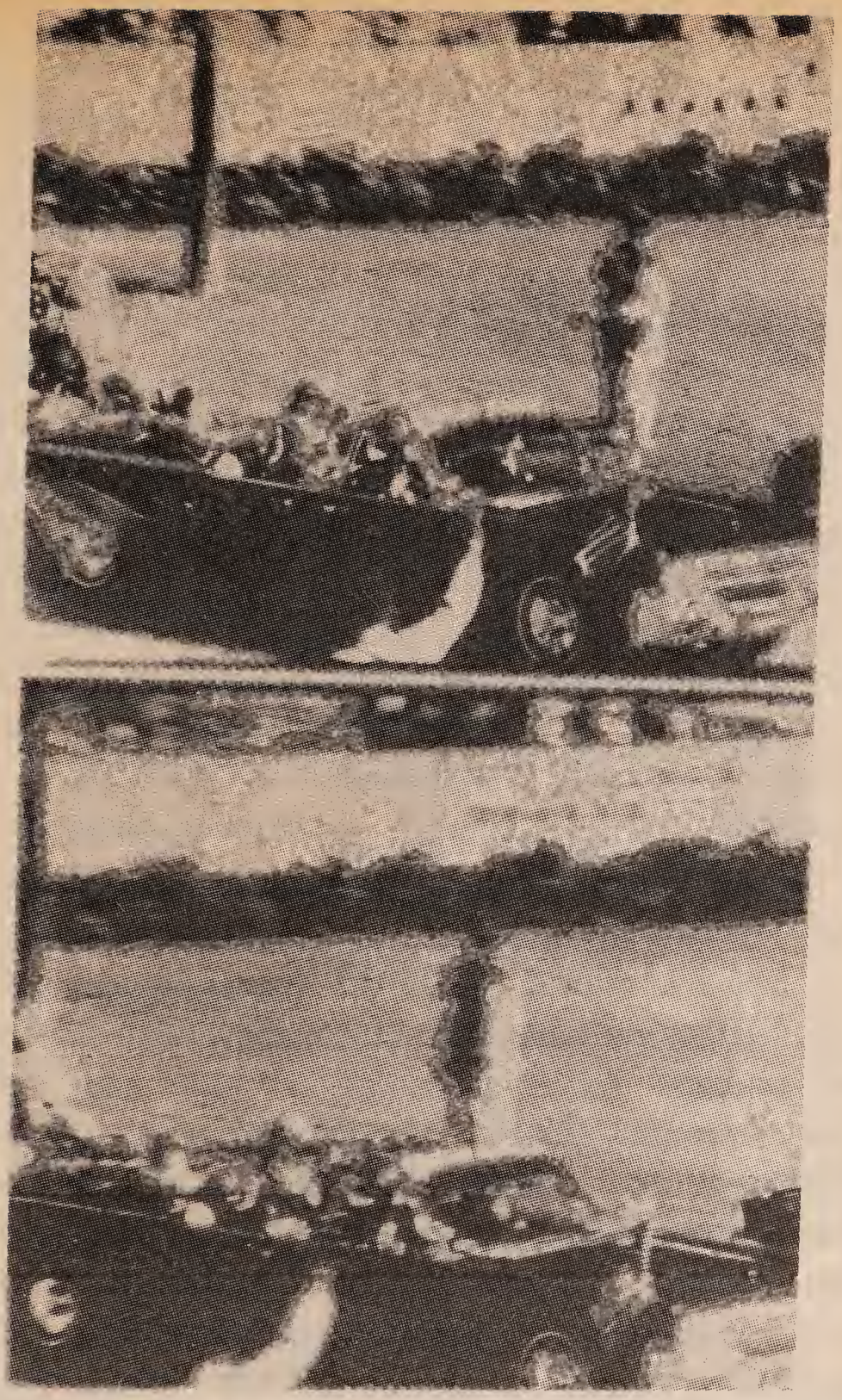
"No, you can't," he replied.

But they were wrong. Just seconds later, the first shot rang out in Dealey Plaza. The waving President's hand stopped in midair. Jacqueline Kennedy looked around in confusion. There was so much noise—the crowds, the cars, the motorcycles backfiring. What was happening?

Another shot. The President reached for his throat. Governor Connally fell into his wife's lap. Onlookers ran in all directions while others ducked for cover. More shots. The President of the United States fell motionless into the arms of Jacqueline Kennedy.

Driver Will Greer hit the accelerator. The limousine raced under the triple overpass to Dallas's Parkland Memorial Hospital. Sirens echoed through the plaza. People who moments before were enjoying their vibrant President now ran aimlessly in terror . . . or stood motionless, numb with shock.

News of the disaster in Dallas spread over the airwaves. While doctors at Parkland Memorial Hospital fought to save the President's life, Americans waited in disbelief and horror. Would the familiar voice of John Kennedy ever speak to the nation again?



Two frames from the famous film taken by Benjamin Zapruder of the President getting shot. The frames occur about one half-second apart. In the top frame, you can see the President slumping as he's shot. Governor Connally does not react until the bottom frame, more than a half-second later. People contended that this was proof the Warren Commission was wrong, and that the two men could not possibly have been hit by the same bullet with this kind of time lapse. But if the Warren Commission is wrong, then it's impossible Oswald fired all the bullets that shot the President. (AP/Wide World Photos)

One Thousand Days in Office

. . . Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans—born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage—and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty.

. . . The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country

and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

These are the inspiring words delivered by John Fitzgerald Kennedy in his inaugural address on January 20, 1961. He spoke to a country that *needed* inspiration. Nineteen hundred sixty-one was a turbulent time. Civil rights disturbances were becoming more common in the South. Poverty was a growing concern. There was discontent all over America.

Neighboring Cuba had recently been taken over by a dictator named Fidel Castro. Castro was a Communist, and many Americans were afraid of this Soviet ally so close to American soil. Was a war lurking around the corner? The United States needed a strong leader, someone with the energy to tackle mounting problems.

Along came Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy—handsome, young, and full of vitality. He campaigned throughout the United States. Alongside him was his beautiful and elegant wife, Jacqueline. They were the athletic parents of young Caroline, and Mrs. Kennedy was pregnant. Voters liked the idea of a healthy young American family in the White House.

Kennedy's eloquent speeches and great wit

John F. Kennedy, youngest man ever elected President, giving his famous inaugural address in Washington, D.C.
(Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library, USA Signal Corps #SC578830)

poured into American homes through television and radio. He seemed ready to take charge and "get this country moving again." In November 1960, he defeated Richard Nixon. John Kennedy, only forty-six years old, became the thirty-fifth President of the United States.

The Kennedy administration began on a note of great hope, calling itself the "New Frontier." Right away, Kennedy started an experimental program called the Peace Corps. He called on the young people of America to help their neighbors around the world. Peace Corps volunteers would go to developing countries and would help those developing countries help themselves. Kennedy's program was an instant success. Thousands of enthusiastic volunteers came forward, ready to improve the world.

As volunteer Americans across the United States got ready to travel to Africa, Asia, and South America, John and Jacqueline Kennedy prepared for a trip to Paris to build diplomatic ties with France's President de Gaulle. De Gaulle disagreed with the other European allies on several issues. Nuclear arms was one of them. Could all the major nations, including the Soviet Union, agree on rules to limit the development of these dangerous weapons? But rumor was that de Gaulle doubted the ability of this young President to handle world affairs. Could John Kennedy gain his respect?

Yes, with the help of his elegant wife. Jackie's grace and fashion-sense, her knowledge of French history and flawless use of the French language

charmed all who laid eyes on her. That included Charles de Gaulle. Paris called her "the queen of queens." De Gaulle proclaimed Jackie's husband a responsible and able man. The Paris talks were a success. As John Kennedy gave his farewell to the French press he added this: "I do not think it altogether inappropriate to introduce myself to this audience. I am the man who accompanied Jacqueline Kennedy to Paris, and I have enjoyed it."

Yet, only months later, John Kennedy's Paris triumph was nearly forgotten. The unfortunate "Bay of Pigs" incident occurred, costing many lives and making Kennedy many enemies.

Before John Kennedy became President, a plan had been set in motion by the CIA and former President Eisenhower—a secret plan to invade Cuba and overthrow Castro. On April 17, 1961, fourteen hundred Cubans against Castro landed on a beach at the Bay of Pigs. The CIA planned to provide an "air umbrella" of U.S. Navy fliers who would attack from the sky if necessary and help the Cubans on land defeat Castro.

But Kennedy changed the CIA's plans. He decided it was best to keep American servicemen out of the invasion. If the Soviet Union knew that Americans were behind the invasion, it might cause international problems.

The anti-Castro soldiers were poorly trained and didn't have enough weapons. The invasion was a failure. At first, the United States claimed to have no part in the attack. Cuba and the Soviet Union went to the United Nations, charging that the United States *was* responsible for the Bay of Pigs

incident. Finally, President Kennedy accepted full responsibility for the raid.

The whole world saw the United States and its President as weak. A world power had secretly invaded a tiny country. Besides, that powerful nation had failed! Tension mounted. The Cubans who were against Castro were angry that Kennedy had withdrawn air forces from the invasion. Cubans *for* Castro were angry that Kennedy had invaded Cuba. The CIA was angry that Kennedy had changed their plans. JFK, in turn, held the CIA responsible for the failure at the Bay of Pigs. But, for all the trouble of the Bay of Pigs, matters soon got even worse. John Kennedy was about to face one of the darkest moments in his presidency.

After the Bay of Pigs, Castro asked the Soviets to bring weapons to Cuba. He was afraid that the United States might invade again. By the summer of 1962, President Kennedy had obtained hard evidence that the Soviet Union was secretly building missile launchers in Cuba. They sprouted up quickly—and pointed toward the United States.

What should the President do? Russians were in Cuba building the missile sites. If the President ordered an air strike to knock out the sites, surely some Russians would be killed. The Soviets would want to retaliate. That would bring the world to the brink of nuclear war.

Yet, in a matter of weeks, the launching pads would be completed. Missiles would be ready to fire at every major city in the United States. It would be too late for Kennedy to take action.

Kennedy spent hours in secret meetings with

top advisors. Finally, he told the American people his plan. United States ships would inspect all boats headed for Cuba. Those with military equipment would be turned away. He promised the world that if the missile site construction continued, further action would be taken. He pledged that any missile launched from Cuba to any nation would be considered an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States and that we would retaliate.

Finally, Kennedy called for an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council to take action against this threat to world peace. He asked the UN to supervise the dismantling and withdrawal of all weapons in Cuba. The President called on Soviet Premier Khrushchev to join him "in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the history of man."

For thirteen days the world held its breath. It seemed that nuclear war was only days away. Finally, Khrushchev announced his decision to withdraw his weapons if the U.S. promised not to invade Cuba again. Kennedy agreed. The Cuban Missile Crisis was over.

John Kennedy had earned respect around the globe. He had shown courage and wisdom in a crisis that might have destroyed half the world. But he had also made enemies again. He had agreed to tolerate Castro. To some people, that meant he was "soft on Communism." Some people believed we should *fight* for democracy, not negotiate for peace. Anti-Castro Cubans felt that Kennedy had let them down.

While the world watched Kennedy go head to head against the Soviet premier, the heads of American organized crime were angry with the President. He and his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, were waging another battle. The Kennedys were determined to stop international drug trafficking. It was a plan that would cost the Mafia millions. And the Mafia has its own methods of dealing with people who get in its way. John F. Kennedy was definitely stepping on its toes.

Still, many things seemed well in the nation. Most Americans thought Kennedy could lead the world to a lasting peace. In fact, just over a year later, Kennedy's call to Khrushchev to work for peace would be answered. On June 10, 1963, JFK gave a speech to graduates of American University. The theme was peace, and how every American could help achieve it.

. . . Genuine peace must be the product of many nations, the sum of many acts. It must be dynamic, not static, changing to meet the challenge of each new generation. For peace is a process—a way of solving problems.

With such a peace, there will still be quarrels and conflicting interests, as there are within families and nations. World peace, like community peace, does not require that each man love his neighbor—it requires only that they live together in mutual tolerance, submitting their disputes to a just and peaceful settlement. . .

. . . So, let us not be blind to our differ-

ences—but let us also direct attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved. And if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For in the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal . . .

Just six weeks after his speech, President Kennedy announced that a nuclear test ban treaty would be signed with the Soviet Union. There would be no testing of nuclear weapons in the air, underwater, or in outer space. Ninety-nine nations signed the agreement in the fall of 1963. The Cold War seemed to be thawing.

But in another part of the world, things were gradually heating up. The United States was sending money and advisors to support anticommunists in a war between North and South Vietnam. Should the United States get more involved in this war, or leave the Vietnamese to settle their own future? American opinion was divided. Kennedy's stand was unclear.

While Kennedy tackled problems abroad, tensions mounted at home. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) lead by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) led by Roy Wilkins, were trying to establish equal rights for black citizens. Discrimination was a tremendous problem. Black Ameri-

cans were kept out of public places. Their children were still prevented from going to school with white children. Many Southern blacks were not allowed to register to vote.

Policemen tried to break up the peaceful demonstrations of the NAACP. They brutally beat several black protestors. More militant blacks organized and called for an all-out war against the whites. There was fighting—and bloodshed. The eyes of the nation again turned to President Kennedy. Could he bring peace to his own country?

In September of 1962 the doors opened for a new semester at the University of Mississippi. A very qualified black student named James Meredith wanted to begin his college studies. But he was turned away because of the color of his skin. President Kennedy ordered National Guard troops to go to Mississippi and supervise Meredith's enrollment. Ten months later, on June 11, 1963, President Kennedy spoke these words to the nation.

. . . I hope that every American, regardless of where he lives, will stop and examine his conscience about this and other related incidents. This nation was founded by men of many nations and backgrounds. It was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, and that the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are threatened.

. . . The heart of the question is whether all men are to be afforded equal rights and equal opportunities, whether we are going to treat our

fellow Americans as we want to be treated. If an American, because his skin is dark, cannot eat lunch in a restaurant open to the public; if he cannot send his children to the best public school available; if he cannot vote for the public officials who represent him, if, in short, he cannot enjoy the full and free life which all of us want, then who among us would be content to have the color of his skin changed and stand in his place . . .?

. . . I think we owe them and we owe ourselves a better country than that . . .

Eight days later, JFK sent a civil rights bill to Congress. The bill declared it illegal to discriminate by color or race in all public places—hotels, restaurants, theaters, and stores. Segregated schooling was banned. Voting rights were to be protected.

The bill was not well received in Congress. Although Kennedy was gaining the love and support of many Americans, he was making enemies—again. Many Southerners hated this liberal Northerner. Even Southern members of the Democratic party were divided—for and against him.

And the President had another concern. The 1964 election year was imminent. Kennedy was running for a second term and he seemed sure to win, but he needed the Texas vote. Could this dynamic man win over the people of this Southern state? He would have to try. And so, on November 21, 1963, John F. Kennedy left the security of the White House for the unsettled streets of Texas.

The Trip to Dallas

President Kennedy and his advisors planned a two-day, five-city tour of the Lone Star state. Jack Kennedy hoped to make peace in the Democratic party in Texas. There was a feud going on between Liberal Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough and Conservative Governor John Connally. There was disagreement over the civil rights issue. And where did Texas-born Vice-President Lyndon Johnson stand? Many believed he sided with Connally. Such a split in the Democratic party could cost Kennedy the election. He must go to Texas and smooth matters out. Touring with Jackie would certainly be a benefit. Her gentle manner and radiant beauty had won many votes. The big question was, should Kennedy include a stop in Dallas?

Dallas was normally a friendly place. But groups had developed throughout the city who disliked the politics of John Kennedy. When Adlai Stevenson was in town, prominent businessmen

told him that Kennedy would be wise to skip Dallas on his upcoming tour. But these warnings didn't seem to reach the President. Dallas was included in the itinerary.

Thursday, November 21, 1963.

Jack and Jackie Kennedy say good-bye to their children Caroline and John, Jr. John-John will be three years old on Monday; Caroline will be six two days later. But their parents assure them that they'll be back for a wonderful birthday celebration. After all, this is only a two-day trip.

The Kennedys' first stop is San Antonio. The

JFK playing with his children Caroline and "John-John" in the Oval Office of the White House in October 1962.

(Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library)

crowd welcomes the vibrant presidential couple. All is well. The Kennedys continue on to Fort Worth, where they will spend the night. Hotel staff have put a fresh coat of paint in the President's room. Everything must look perfect for this honored guest.

Friday, November 22, 1963.

The Kennedys board Air Force One after a breakfast talk in Fort Worth. They're off to Dallas where the President will speak to a luncheon crowd. Then they'll continue to Austin for a dinner speech.

In Dallas, FBI agents check the flower arrangements on every table at the Trade Mart, looking for bombs. They have already investigated every person on the guest list and all Trade Mart staff. In fact, anyone who might be anti-Kennedy will be carefully followed.

But at least one man slips through the fingers of the FBI. It's Lee Harvey Oswald, a new employee at the Texas School Book Depository. He isn't seen by government officials as he carries a long brown paper package into work.

An enthusiastic crowd greets Kennedy at Dallas's Love Field. All in all, the trip has been a success so far. True, Governor Connally didn't invite Senator Yarborough to tonight's dinner reception. But Senator Yarborough finally consented to ride in Vice-President Johnson's limousine. Johnson had offered twice on Thursday, but

the senator refused. Today, these Texas Democrats seem to be getting along.

At 12:30 P.M., the sleek limousine rounds the corner of Houston and Elm. It passes the Texas School Book Depository. The next ten seconds are among the worst moments in history. Shots are fired. But how many? From where? By whom? Little did the people in Dealey Plaza know that these questions would be so hard to answer. Only one thing is certain. The shots that rang out that day in Dallas brought a tragic silence that spread around the globe. On November 22, 1963, at 1:00 P.M. Central Standard Time, President John F. Kennedy was pronounced dead. The entire world went into mourning.

A World in Mourning

Late Friday, November 22, 1963.

In Moscow at 10:55 P.M. a classical music program is interrupted. Radio Moscow announces that the President of the United States is dead. Only funeral music is played until midnight, when the station goes off the air. Premier Nikita Khrushchev cuts short his tour of the Ukraine. He hurries back to Moscow. With head bent, he mounts the stairs of the U.S. Embassy to sign the condolence book.

In London, Queen Elizabeth issues a command. The court will be in official mourning for a week. On Saturday from 11:00 A.M. until noon, the clock at Westminster Abbey will ring every minute. This ritual has only been performed at the death of kings.

In West Berlin, 60,000 people assemble on the steps of City Hall where Kennedy spoke to a cheering crowd of 150,000 Germans five months

earlier. Tonight, they are carrying torches, walking in silence.

In Paris, Charles de Gaulle, a man who shows little emotion, speaks solemnly to the grieving people of France. "President Kennedy died like a soldier, under fire, for his duty, and in the service of his country. In the name of the French people . . . I salute this great example and this great memory." He orders the French flag to fly at half-mast.

In Cambodia, Prince Norodum Sihanouk issues an order to take down all anti-American posters. There would be a three-day moratorium on attacks on the United States.

In the Congo, the entire cabinet of the Katango Province hurries to the U.S. Consulate. "We Bantus always mourn the passing of a great chief," they explain.

People around the world share the tragedy, regardless of political or religious differences. But nowhere is the grief as unbearable as it is in the hearts of the American people. The nation is in shock. Businesses close while Americans across the country sit speechless in front of telephones and typewriters. Schools close, too. Children are met at the door by parents in tears. Mothers and fathers from coast to coast try to explain to their children a death no one can understand.

Hearts across America go out to one mother in particular, who must tell her children that their father won't be home for their birthdays. The eyes of the nation are on Jacqueline Kennedy as she prepares herself and her children for the days

ahead. President Lyndon Johnson makes his first presidential proclamation. John Kennedy's funeral will be held on Monday, November 25—a funeral the entire world will attend.

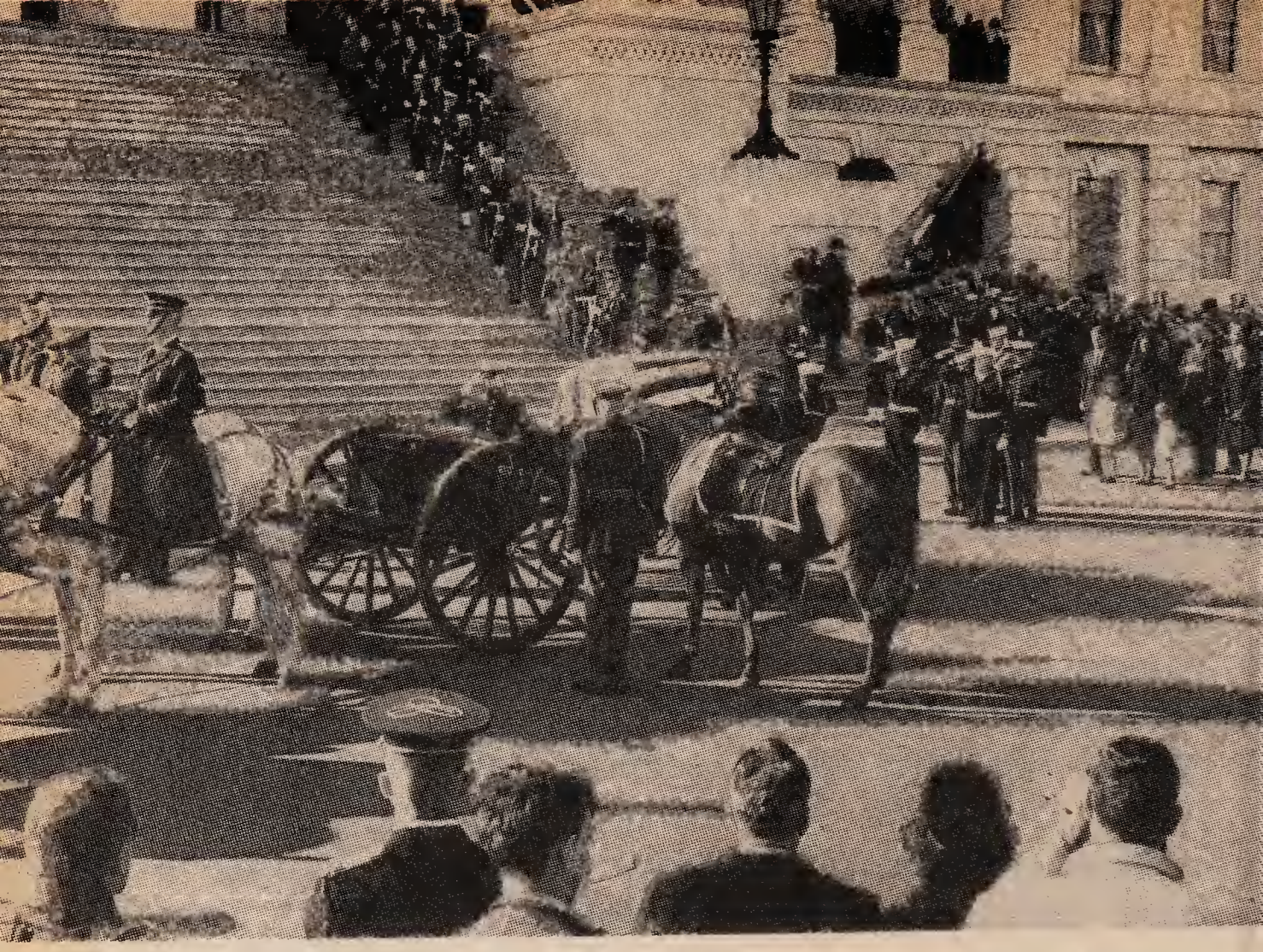
Saturday, November 23, 1963.

Rain pours on the capital city as White House staff begin removing John Kennedy's personal effects. A silent crowd in Lafayette Park watches while models of sailing ships, a globe of the world, and a favorite rocking chair are loaded onto a truck. At 4:22 A.M. a gray Navy ambulance arrives. A coffin is removed and brought into the East Room of the White House.

Sunday, November 24, 1963.

Thousands stand outside the White House to see the mahogany casket loaded onto the same caisson that carried Franklin Roosevelt. It now waits with seven matched gray horses to lead the procession to the Capitol Building Rotunda. There, the President will lie in state on the same catafalque, an ornamental structure, that held the body of Abraham Lincoln.

Behind the caisson is Blackjack, John Kennedy's horse. In his saddle is a silver sword, forever sheathed. Polished cavalry boots are reversed in the stirrups. These are symbols of the fallen warrior. The young leader will never ride again. Jac-



The President's horse formed a part of the funeral procession in Washington. It appeared riderless with a reversed boot in the stirrup, the sign of a fallen soldier.

(Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library, #8255-15)

queline Kennedy and her children ride in a black limousine to the Capitol. They walk up the thirty-six steps and through the gold doors into the Rotunda.

Meanwhile, news of another silencing shot begins to spread. Lee Harvey Oswald, the man arrested for killing President Kennedy, has been shot in the Dallas County Police Station by night-club owner Jack Ruby. Dr. Malcolm Perry is called into the emergency room at Parkland Memorial Hospital, where two days before he fought to save the life of John Kennedy. Again, there is no hope.

At 1:00 P.M., the man who might have answered the questions that forever plague a nation is gone. Lee Harvey Oswald is dead.

Over the next twenty-four hours, more than 250,000 Americans will pass through the gold doors of the Capitol to pay their last respects to the young President. Officials plan to close the doors to the public at 9:00 P.M. But that won't be the case.

At 9:00 the line still stretches for three miles, people standing eight abreast. They have come from all over the country. Two teenagers have walked forty-six miles from Baltimore to say good-bye to John Kennedy. Suddenly, during the night, Jackie and Robert Kennedy return to the Rotunda. They slip behind the ropes that separate the silent crowd from the coffin. Jackie kneels and kisses the flag that covers her husband's casket. Then she rises and stares into the eyes of the mourners close by. Before she leaves, a thin smile of appreciation crosses her lips. At dawn on Monday, the crowds are still coming.

Monday, November 25, 1963.

Today is a day of funerals. At a brief ceremony in Texas, Lee Harvey Oswald, the suspected assassin, is lowered into the ground. There are few mourners. Just thirty miles away, Dallas Police Officer J.D. Tippit is buried. Oswald was believed to have shot Tippit while trying to escape. Tippit's funeral is attended by numerous fellow officers

Lee Harvey Oswald being taken into custody by the Dallas Police for the shootings of President John F. Kennedy and Police Officer Tippit. Shortly after entering headquarters, when asked if he shot the President, Oswald replied, "I'm just a patsy." *Patsy* is another word for the fall guy, or the person who takes the blame for something.

(AP/Wide World Photos)

Jack Ruby, Lee Harvey Oswald's convicted killer, shortly after being denied a new trial in April 1964. Conspiracy theorists said that Ruby volunteered to kill Oswald because he was dying of cancer anyway. (AP/Wide World Photos)

and family. In Washington, D.C. a funeral that will echo through the centuries begins at 1:05 P.M. in St. Mathew's Church, eight blocks from the White House. When the procession leaves the church, the pace is set at one hundred steps per minute.

Leading the procession is Jacqueline Kennedy, a thin figure in black, her face veiled. Behind her are John Kennedy's brothers and sisters with their spouses. They are followed by the new President, Lyndon Johnson, and his wife.

The line continues, with the solemn faces of princes, queens, and dignitaries from around the world. Charles de Gaulle of France, Queen Frederika of Greece, Chancellor Ludwig Earhart of West Germany, Prince Philip of England, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, and First Deputy Premier Mikoyan of Russia all attend. Representatives of ninety-two nations stand with the American people in mourning. Across the United States, every train stops on its tracks, every plane waits on the runway, every car and bus halts. For five long minutes, the nation is completely still in silent tribute to John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

The procession crosses the Potomac River to the Arlington Cemetery. There, JFK will be laid to rest. Fifty fighter jets roar overhead in an air salute. Cannons fire in a twenty-one-gun salute. The echo of a lone trumpet playing "Taps" rings over the grassy hill. At the gravesite, Jackie Kennedy lights the eternal flame next to her husband's grave. At 3:34 P.M., the thirty-fifth President of the United States is gone forever.

John F. Kennedy's grave, lit by an eternal flame in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.

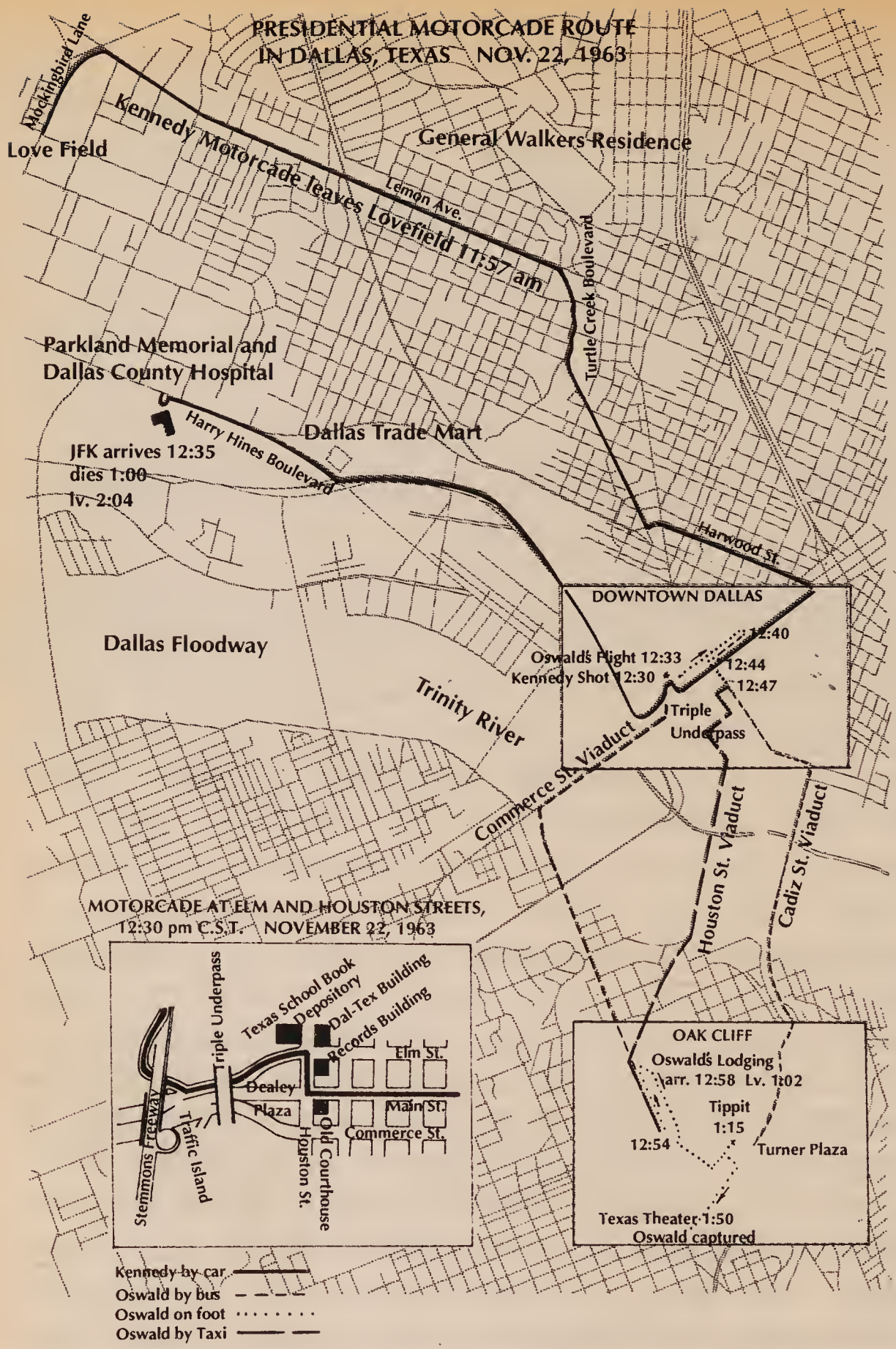
(Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library, #74-202)

But the ordeal is far from over. A beloved president was snatched from the American people. The one man who might have told them why, Lee Harvey Oswald, is also gone. How could one of the most powerful men in the world, guarded day and night, be killed in broad daylight by one simple Book Depository employee? And how could Lee Oswald, surrounded by police in a county jail, be gunned down by Jack Ruby, an ordinary night-club owner? Americans in disbelief ask, "How could this happen?" The American people demand an answer.

The Warren Commission

On November 29, four days after John F. Kennedy was buried, President Johnson made the first attempt to answer the American people's questions. He appointed a panel of seven men to examine the pieces in the assassination puzzle and fit them together. Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, would head the investigation.

From February until June, the Warren Commission heard testimonies. They poured over evidence. All summer long, staff argued and rewrote chapters of the report. An anxious public waited for answers. Finally, on September 24, 1964, their answer was ready. Chief Justice Earl Warren handed President Lyndon Johnson the completed report. "It's heavy," said Johnson as he accepted the twenty-six volumes of information. Four days later, the Warren Report was released to the public. This is the picture they pieced together.



Route of JFK's motorcade through Dallas on his way to lunch at the Dallas Trade Mart. Later, many experts criticized the choice of route because of the sharp turn necessary directly in front of the School Book Depository Building. This turn caused the President's motorcade to slow to a crawl, and thus become a very easy target. Such a turn was not standard security procedure.

Friday, November 22, 1963.

7:00 A.M.—Lee Harvey Oswald prepares to leave for work. He looks in on his sleeping wife, Marina. She lives in the home of Ruth and Michael Paine in Irving, Texas. So do Lee and Marina's two young children. Lee visits them on weekends. During the week, he lives in a rooming house in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas. He is registered there under the name of O.H. Lee.

Oswald leaves behind $170 cash and his wedding ring. With $12 in his pocket, he puts on his blue jacket, and heads quietly out the door. Lee walks up the street to the home of his coworker, Wes Frazier. Lee and Wes ride into Dallas together. They say very little to each other during the forty-five minute drive.

8:00 A.M.—Oswald and Frazier arrive at the Texas School Book Depository where they both work. Oswald takes a long package wrapped in brown paper out of the backseat. "What ya got there, Lee?" asks Frazier. "Curtain rods," Lee replies.

In Forth Worth, President John F. Kennedy prepares for another day of touring and speech-making. After a breakfast talk in Fort Worth, he and his wife Jacqueline will board Air Force One. They are scheduled to arrive in Dallas at 11:30.

11:37 A.M.—Air Force One touches down on Love Field. After handshakes and hellos, the motorcade begins the trip through downtown Dallas. Crowds gather in Dealey Plaza. The route was printed in all the Dallas papers. Everyone in Dallas knows exactly where the President will be . . . and when.

12:00—The motorcade approaches the corner of Lemmon Avenue and Lomo Alto Street. A group of schoolgirls wave a sign. It says, *Mr. President, Please Stop and Shake Our Hands.* John Kennedy smiles and tells the driver to stop. Little do these schoolgirls know, they will be among the last people in the world to hold the hand of the President.

The motorcade continues down Main Street. People hang out of building windows to catch a glimpse of JFK. Away from downtown, Officer J.D. Tippit eats a quick lunch and hurries back to his patrol in the Oak Cliff section.

Dallas dress manufacturer Abraham Zapruder dusts off his 8-mm home movie camera. He closes up shop. He's heading to the parade. He wants to film the motorcade. That way he'll have his own movie of John Kennedy to show friends and family.

The crew at the Texas School Book Depository knock off for lunch. "Hey, let's go down and see the President," says one. Kennedy will go right past their building in about twenty-five minutes. They all head down in the elevator. Lee Harvey Oswald, however, doesn't join them. "You go on down," he says to his co-workers, "and send the elevator back up."

12:15 P.M.—Oswald is alone on the sixth floor. Quietly, he piles boxes of books by the window in the southeast corner. He stands back to look at his arrangement. The boxes will hide part of him from view. People on the street probably won't notice him behind the cartons.

Police officers let reporters examine the spot where Oswald is supposed to have stood when he shot President Kennedy. The carefully arranged wall of boxes would have hid Oswald from passersby. (AP/Wide World Photos)

Oswald opens the window partway. He hears the sound of motorcycles in the distance. Quickly, he unwraps the package he brought to work. Curtain rods? Hardly. He pulls out a 6.5-mm Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. *Made in Italy* is stamped on top of the gun. Oswald assembles it. Then, he waits by the window. The motorcade is almost in view.

Below, on Elm Street in Dealey Plaza stands Arnold Rowland. He looks up at the orange-brick Texas School Book Depository. "Boy!" he says to someone next to him. "You sure can't say the Secret Service isn't on the ball. Look at that guy

up there in the window with a rifle." Little did Arnold Rowland know that the man with the gun was no Secret Service agent.

12:29 P.M.—The limousine slows down as it makes the hard left turn onto Elm. Oswald takes aim through the four-power scope on his rifle. President Kennedy waves to the cheering crowd.

12:30 P.M.—Boom! Abraham Zapruder is startled by the loud noise. He jiggles his camera. Kennedy's waving hand seems to freeze in midair. He begins to turn to his wife. A third of a second later the limousine passes behind a road sign. For a crucial second, the car is out of Zapruder's view.

One second later—Oswald fires again. Boom! The car reappears. Something is wrong. The President is clutching his throat. Governor Connally is frowning. Connally says, "Oh no, no." His right shoulder slumps. His cheeks puff out as if all the wind has been blown out of him. Spectators Jean Hill and Mary Moorman watch as the governor falls into his wife's arms. Jackie Kennedy leans toward her husband to see what's wrong.

About two more seconds—Boom! John Kennedy is slammed back into the seat. He hits the back cushion and falls limp into Jackie's lap. "Oh my God, they killed my husband!" she cries. "Jack! Jack!" Blood covers the backseat of the limousine.

Secret Service agents are trained to respond to a gunshot in a second. Almost ten seconds have passed since the first shot. Yet, in all that time, no one has moved to protect the President. Now Jackie Kennedy scrambles up the seat and over the back of the car for help. Agent Clint Hill

FBI agents drive in a car similar to the one used by JFK in a reenactment of the assassination for the Warren Commission in 1964. In the rear, you can see windows open in the upper right corner of the Texas School Book Depository building. This is the spot where Lee Harvey Oswald is supposed to have stood when he fired his shots.

(AP/Wide World Photos)

jumps off the running board of the follow-up car. He pushes Jackie back into her seat. Meanwhile, another agent has already jumped on top of the Vice-President to protect him. The blue Lincoln nearly flies under the overpass at seventy miles per hour. It's headed for Parkland Memorial Hospital in a futile attempt to save the President's life. The Zapruder camera runs out of film.

12:31 P.M.—Lee Harvey Oswald shoves his rifle behind some nearby boxes. He races down five

flights of stairs to the lunchroom. It takes him less than ninety seconds. Back out on the street, people are running in terror. Many see smoke puffs coming from the grassy knoll across from the Depository building. "I heard shots from up there," says one. "Let's go!" A newscaster reports from the scene. "It appears as though something has happened in the motorcade route. There's numerous people running up the hill alongside Elm Street there by the Stemmons Freeway. Several police officers are rushing up the hill at this time. Stand by." They are all running up the grassy knoll.

But they're stopped by men who flash Secret Service badges. "Leave the hill immediately," say the men. "We're taking care of everything."

12:32 P.M.—A police officer rushes inside the Texas School Book Depository. Roy Truly, building superintendent, meets him at the door. Together they go through the building, looking for an assassin. On the second floor, they meet Lee Oswald. He's calmly drinking a Coke from the soda machine. The policeman pulls his gun and points it at Lee. "Do you know this man?" he asks Truly. "Yes, he works here," Truly answers. Both men leave Oswald to continue their search.

Police speak to witnesses in Dealey Plaza. Amos Euins, a fifteen-year-old boy, says he saw a man take aim and fire from the sixth floor of the Depository. Bob Jackson, a newspaper photographer, saw a rifle being withdrawn from the same window. Howard Brennan watched as Oswald fired the last shot. He describes the man he saw. "He

was white, slender, about one hundred and sixty-five pounds, five foot ten," reports Brennan, "and in his early thirties."

At the Dallas Trade Mart, the organist is playing "Hail to the Chief." Some guests are cutting into their steaks when word of the terrible news comes. The President will not arrive. A hush settles on the enormous room of almost three thousand people.

12:33 P.M.—Lee Oswald slips out of the orange-brick building. Moments later the Texas School Book Depository is sealed off. No one can enter or leave. At Parkland Memorial Hospital, doctors fight a hopeless battle to save the President. There is a gunshot wound in Kennedy's throat. Dr. Malcolm Perry opens the wound. He inserts a breathing tube in efforts to keep Kennedy alive.

12:34 P.M.—Oswald walks up Elm Street and boards a bus that goes to the Oak Cliff section. Traffic is slow downtown because of the shooting. Oswald asks the driver for a transfer and gets off. He walks a few blocks and then gets into a taxi.

12:48 P.M.—Officer J.D. Tippit hears a broadcast on Police Channel One. The President has been shot. He hears a description of the suspected assassin.

12:59 P.M.—Oswald enters his rooming house at 1026 North Beckley Avenue. "Oh, you are in a hurry!" says housekeeper Earlene Roberts. Oswald rushes past her. He goes up to his room. He puts on his jacket. He reaches for his pistol and puts it in the waistband of his pants. Oswald leaves the rooming house.

1:03 P.M.—Jacqueline Kennedy bends and clasps her husband's hand. Father Huber enters the room. "*Si vivis, ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis . . .*" He is saying the last rites in Latin. President John F. Kennedy is dead.

1:15 P.M.—Officer Tippit patrols the Oak Cliff area. He sees a man who fits the description on the police radio. He pulls over to the curb and stops. "Hey, come on over here for a minute, buddy," he says to Oswald. Then Tippit gets out of his car. Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Oswald shoots Officer Tippit four times. Witnesses stand by helplessly.

Oswald throws aside the empty bullet shells and his jacket. He runs up Jefferson Boulevard. Police sirens come his way. Oswald ducks into the doorway of Hardy's shoe store. He's spotted by Johnny Calvin Brewer, the store manager. "He looks scared, like he's been running," thinks Brewer.

1:22 P.M.—Dallas Police have already found the sniper's nest (the place the assassin shot from). It's on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. Now they discover a rifle hidden behind nearby boxes. Deputy Seymour Weitzman mistakenly identifies the gun as a German Mauser.

Roy Truly tells police, "I have a man missing." The one worker that he can't find is Lee Harvey Oswald.

1:30 P.M.—A newscaster has been standing by at Parkland Memorial Hospital. After endless moments of waiting, he reports. "Just a moment. We have a bulletin coming in. The President of

the United States is dead. Women here [sic] in shock, some have fainted. Grown men, Secret Service men standing by the emergency room, tears streaming down their faces. There's only one word to describe the picture here, and that's grief, and much of it. It's official. As of just a few moments ago, the President of the United States is dead."

United States military units around the world are put on alert. Maybe the assassination is just the beginning of a full-scale attack on the United States. Over five hundred missiles are in silos and ready on launching pads. Bombers are warmed up on the runway. Ten submarines patrol under the sea. Each one has sixteen nuclear-tipped rockets. The United States is ready for war.

1:45 P.M.—The police sirens pass, so Oswald continues up the street. Brewer has heard the radio reports about the shooting. He decides to follow Oswald. A few doors up is the Texas Theater. Brewer watches as Oswald ducks behind the cashier and goes into the movie house. Brewer tells the cashier to phone the police. He goes into the theater.

1:47 P.M.—Twelve policemen surround the Texas Theater. One runs up to the projection room. "Turn up the house lights," he orders. Brewer points to a man alone in the back. It's Oswald. "There he is," Brewer tells Patrolman McDonald.

1:50 P.M.—The officers approach the seated man in the back of the Texas Theater. Oswald mutters, "Well, it's all over now." He reaches for his pistol. He tries to shoot another policeman. There's a

brief scuffle. Then Oswald is led out. Police radio the station that they're on their way with a suspect in the killing of Officer Tippit.

2:08 P.M.—John Kennedy's body is gently placed in a bronze casket. The casket is driven to Love Field to board Air Force One.

2:15 P.M.—Police Captain Fritz returns from the Texas School Book Depository. He tells two men to get a search warrant for Oswald's rooming house. Lee is the only employee that the Depository can't account for. Another policeman says, "Captain, we will save you a trip. There he sits."

Oswald is officially arrested. When asked if he shot Tippit or Kennedy he replies, "I did not shoot anybody. No, sir. I'm just a patsy."

2:38 P.M.—United States District Judge Sarah T. Hughes swears in Lyndon B. Johnson as the thirty-sixth president of the United States. Three minutes later, with the casket and the new President on board, Air Force One takes off for Washington, D.C.

3:26 P.M.—Radios announce that twenty-four-year-old Lee Harvey Oswald has been arrested. He is the only suspect in the killing of Officer Tippit and the President of the United States.

Captain Fritz interrogates Oswald about the shootings. Oswald denies all charges. No notes are taken. No tape recorder records.

5:58 P.M. EST—Air Force One arrives at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. A gray Navy ambulance waits to take JFK's body to Bethesda Naval Hospital. There the autopsy will be performed.

Jackie Kennedy and the late President's brother Bobby ride in the ambulance, too.

7:30 P.M.—Dr. James Humes receives the body at Bethesda.

8:00 P.M.—He begins the autopsy. Six hours have passed since the moment in Dallas that changed history forever.

Two days later, Sunday, November 24, 1963.

11:15 A.M.—A handcuffed Lee Harvey Oswald is brought out from his cell in the Dallas city jail. He is being moved to a more secure county jail. TV cameras crowd the basement of the police station.

11:20 A.M.—Nightclub owner Jack Ruby slips in through the station doors on Main Street. He pushes through the crowd of reporters around the prisoner. "Oswald!" he shouts. Bang! Ruby shoots Oswald in the stomach. A TV audience of millions looks on in astonishment. Fighting breaks out as police jump Ruby.

In Washington, D.C., a black caisson led by seven gray horses arrives at the White House gates. Crowds watch from the street.

11:40 A.M.—Oswald, gray and unconscious, lies in the same Dallas emergency room where Governor Connally was treated two days before. Once again, Dr. Malcolm Perry fights to save a life. Two days ago his patient was President John Kennedy. Today, it is Kennedy's assassin.

1:07 P.M.—Lee Harvey Oswald is pronounced dead at Parkland Memorial Hospital. It is two days and seven minutes since JFK died across the hall.

First Verdict

According to the Warren Commission findings, Oswald fired three bullets from the Texas School Book Depository Building. With his Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, he wounded Governor Connally and killed President Kennedy. Most important, the Warren Commission determined that Oswald acted alone.

What made them so sure? The key words in solving any murder are **method, means,** and **motive.** How did the assassin do it—what was his weapon? That's the **method.** How did he arrange to commit the crime without being caught? That's his **means.** And often hardest to prove—why would the assassin want to do it? That's his **motive.**

To answer these questions you need **evidence.** Good, *hard* evidence. It has to be very convincing. The jury must be so persuaded by it, that the **alleged** assassin is pronounced guilty **beyond any reasonable doubt.** That's a lot of legal talk.

But these are key words in any trial. *Alleged* means something we think is probably true, but it's not yet proven. An *alleged assassin* is someone charged with the crime. But he has not gone to trial yet. He could be proven innocent after all.

A **jury** is a group of twelve people selected randomly from the general public. It could be almost anyone, even one of your relatives or teachers. The jury's job is to hear the case and give a verdict—innocent or guilty. Lawyers explain the evidence. The jury hears the evidence. In the American legal system, a person is innocent until proven guilty *beyond any reasonable doubt.* If the jury is unsure, the verdict is innocent. Would Oswald have been found guilty of assassination? Many people think that when all the evidence was heard, the jury would have had doubts.

When Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald, he stole something from the American people. He robbed them of a chance to get at the truth. Oswald might have told us what really happened in Dallas on November 22, 1963. But Lee Harvey Oswald never came to trial. At least not in the usual sense. There was no court debate between lawyers, and no jury to hear the evidence. Instead there was the Warren Commission. They listened to a variety of evidence to reach their verdict.

First, there were **eyewitness accounts.** These are from people who were there and saw what happened. Kennedy was shot during a presidential parade. There were hundreds of people present. They all had different views of the motorcade. There was a lot of commotion, before, during,

and after the shooting. People were excited, afraid, and then horrified. So there were many different accounts. Where you stand, what you can see and hear, how you feel and what's happening right around you, all influence your eyewitness account.

Secondly, the Warren Commission examined **photographs and film.** Of course, many spectators brought cameras that day. But in 1963, cameras were a lot different from how they are today. The video cameras of the 1990s can record in color, with sound. They can zoom in for close-ups. Zapruder's camera could do none of those things. Yet, the Zapruder film became one of the most important pieces of film in history. The often blurry, silent movie is the best picture we have of the assassination of JFK. It shows both the President and Governor Connally reacting to the shots.

What can the movie tell us if it doesn't show the person firing those shots? Quite a lot. By studying the movements of the people in the motorcade, we can come close to knowing these things:

1) How many shots were fired;
2) How many seconds elapsed between shots; and
3) Where the shots hit.

We can also get some interesting background information. We can see who was standing in the surrounding area, and what their responses were. This is helpful because then we can verify eyewitness accounts. One woman told the Warren

Commission that she was standing on the grassy knoll next to the Texas School Book Depository Building and saw a man run by her. But maybe she imagined it in all the excitement. The Z-film, as it's called, shows the same grassy knoll in the background. It allows us to identify this same woman on the knoll, and even the man running. We still don't know who the man was or why he ran. But we do know that the woman was telling the truth. So now everything she says seems more important—a clue worth following.

The third element the Warren Commission examined were the **ballistic reports.** Ballistic reports are technical evidence from the weapon and bullets that were used. In the Kennedy case, the rifle was a 6.5-millimeter Mannlicher-Carcano. (6.5 millimeters refers to the size of the bullet.) Ballistic evidence is very convincing because it can be proven scientifically. These are some of the questions that have to be answered:

1) How fast and powerful was the gun? Could it shoot a bullet moving fast enough to cause the governor's and the President's wounds?
2) How many seconds would it take a good marksman to load, aim, and fire? This information is compared with the evidence on film. Could that rifle fire shots as close together as they seemed to come when we examine the Z-film?
3) What about any bullets or fragments found? Do they match the gun? What about the

empty shell casings found near the "sniper's nest"? Do they match the rifle, too?

4) Are there fingerprints on the rifle? Is there any nitrate powder from firing the gun on the alleged assassin's cheek and hand?

5) Could a bullet shot from the sixth floor of the Depository follow a path directly to the spot where the President was hit? (This is called the bullet's **trajectory.**)

The fourth piece of evidence was the **autopsy report.** These reports are written by doctors who examine the body to determine the exact cause of death. This is particularly important in a murder investigation.

The doctors at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas concentrated on the President's life. Of course, they noticed where the wounds were and what they looked like. But the main concern of the doctors at the hospital was to save the patient's life. It's the job of the *autopsy* doctors to examine each wound thoroughly. What do they look for when there are gunshot wounds? One of the things they determine is whether a wound is from a bullet going in or coming out of the body. If the President had an **entry** wound on his back, that tells us he was shot from behind. If he has an **exit** wound on his back, that means he was shot from in front of the motorcade. The location and type of wound can determine if a shot came from behind, in front, or above.

Doctors also look at how much bullet fragment

is left in the body. Is it the same amount of metal that's missing from a bullet that was found *outside* of the body? If the bullet fragments plus the used bullet equal the metal of one unused bullet, that's evidence. It tells us the used bullet caused the injury. Now, if the used bullet came from the Mannlicher-Carcano, and the Mannlicher-Carcano belongs to Oswald, he certainly looks guilty, doesn't he? One piece of evidence links with another. Hopefully, it all leads back to the same suspect. Then the case is clear. But that's not always the way it goes.

Finally, the Warren Commission examined the **background information.** What was the life of the alleged assassin like? Possibly, this information shows an obvious motive. Had he ever been violent before? Was there anything to be learned about his ideas, feelings, and beliefs that might tell the Commission the reason he shot the President? Who were his friends? Did he belong to any organizations or clubs? This might tell the Commission if someone else helped Oswald plan the shooting. When people plan together to assassinate a president, that's a **conspiracy.** What reasons would the conspirators have to kill the President of the United States? In the case of Oswald, these are very perplexing questions.

Who was Lee Harvey Oswald? Lee was born in New Orleans on October 18, 1939. His father died before he was born. His mother had to work long hours to support Lee and his two older brothers.

At seventeen, he joined the U.S. Marines. He told fellow Marines that he supported Castro and

the Soviet Union. Yet he was stationed in Japan where U-2 planes flew secret missions over Russia. This seems a conflict of United States security interests, to have had a Soviet sympathizer so near to sensitive activities.

At nineteen, Oswald applied for a pass to leave the Marines. He said he wanted to return home and care for his sick mother. But when he left the Marine Corps he defected to the Soviet Union instead. In Moscow, he told officials that he hated the United States. He offered to tell them military secrets if they would let him become a citizen. At first, the Soviets said no. Lee was so upset he tried to kill himself. So the Soviets said he could stay. They gave him a job and a place to live in Minsk. He married Marina Prusakova and they had a child. In June 1962, Lee and his wife applied for visas to leave. Where did they want to go? Back to the United States. Lee said he was disappointed with the Communist life.

Back in the U.S., Oswald was active in pro-Castro activities. In late September of 1963, Marina and their daughter left New Orleans for Irving, Texas. They moved in with friends, Ruth and Michael Paine. Lee said he'd join them soon. But instead, he left for Mexico City. There he reportedly visited the Cuban and Soviet embassies. He sought entry to their countries. He was turned away.

So, Oswald returned to Dallas. He rented a room in a boardinghouse in the Oak Cliff section. On October 16, 1963, Lee was hired to fill book orders at the Texas School Book Depository.

According to the Warren Commission, Oswald was an unhappy American who hated his country. He tried to join one political cause after another. Oswald wanted to make some kind of mark on history. So he shot the President. The Warren Commission was satisfied. They had their man—with means, method, and motive.

At first, their conclusion seemed very clear-cut. The shell casings found on the sixth floor, a bullet found on a hospital stretcher, and bullet fragments from the presidential limousine, all matched the Mannlicher-Carcano. How did they know the gun belonged to Oswald? It turned out that a man named A.J. Hidell had purchased the rifle from a mail-order company. Handwriting analysis showed that A.J. Hidell was none other than Lee Harvey Oswald. For $21.45, Oswald bought the gun that took the life of President Kennedy. Oswald's fingerprints were even found on the brown wrapping paper in the sniper's nest. All the evidence was found, except the curtain rods . . . Several witnesses positively identified Oswald as the man they saw in the sixth floor window of the Depository.

The Commission's autopsy report showed that the bullets that hit the President and the governor were fired from behind. The path of the bullet could be traced back to that same sixth floor window.

What about the photographic evidence? Remember Abraham Zapruder and his home movie camera? That film was viewed over and over again. And at first, it *did* present a problem.

By watching the movements of Kennedy and Connally on film, the Commission saw that the two men seemed to be hit only a second or so apart. That's not enough time for Oswald to have fired, reloaded, and fired accurately again. FBI test results, firing the same gun, showed that the minimum time to fire, work the bolt, and pull the trigger was 2.3 seconds.

The Commission soon had an explanation. Oswald's first bullet missed. It hit the pavement. Bystander James Tague was hit and injured by flying concrete. The next bullet moved at a downward slope with a velocity of 1,772 feet per second. It entered Kennedy's back about six inches below the top of his shirt collar. Then it exited through the bottom of his neck. It continued on its path and hit Governor Connally, who was sitting in front of the President. It entered his upper right back. Then it exited through his chest and smashed his right wrist, which was resting on his left thigh. It still didn't stop there. The bullet exited through his wrist and punctured his leg about five inches above the knee. This explained how Kennedy and Connally could have been hit within a second of each other. It was known as the **single bullet theory.** Oswald fired a third bullet. That was the fatal shot that hit the President in the head.

That's a very unusual path for a bullet, but not an impossible one. Still, some Commission members, right from the start, didn't agree with the theory. Governor Connally said it was "inconceivable" that the same bullet that hit Kennedy also

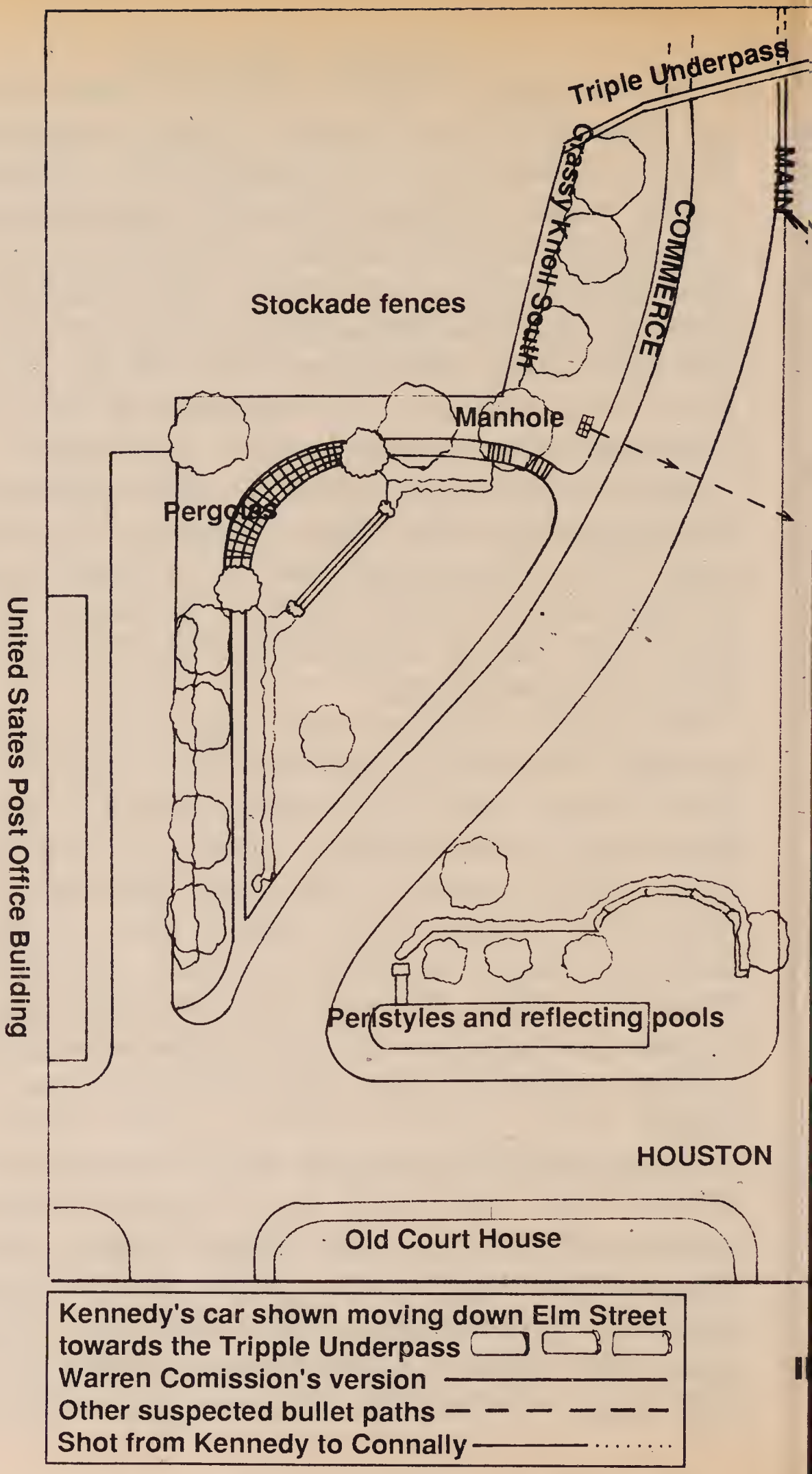
hit him. Still, the Warren Commission stood firm. Oswald, alone, they said, killed the President.

The report also said that the assassination was a tragic event that might have been averted. The Commission went on to say that the FBI, Secret Service, and the Dallas Police had not planned for the President's protection well enough. Procedures must be reviewed and changed. In the future, a president must receive better protection.

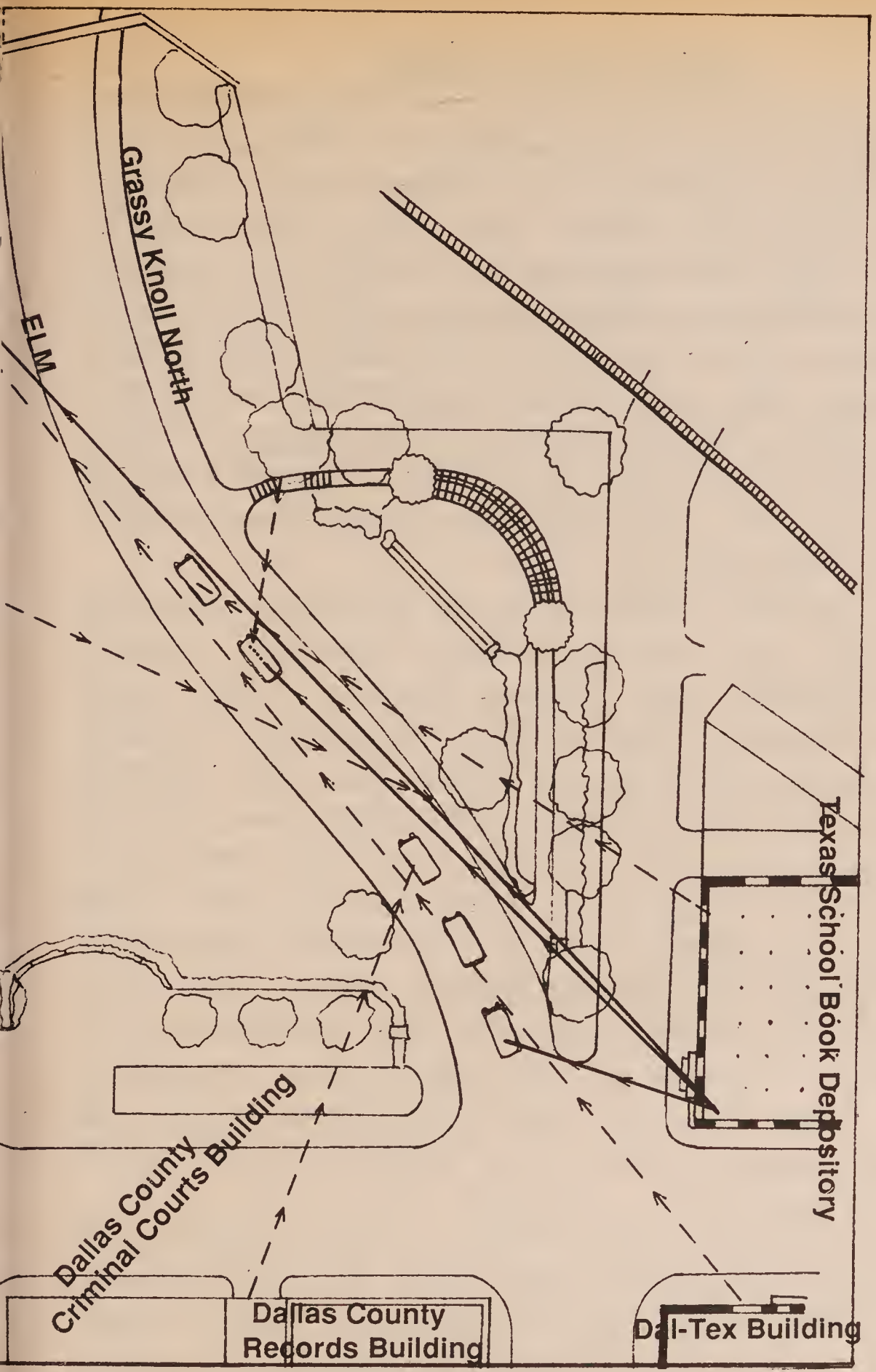
Many Americans heard the Warren Commission findings with relief. True, President Kennedy was gone. That left a deep sorrow in their hearts. But at least there was an answer. At least the healing could now begin. At least no one else was involved in the assassination.

For some, however, the words of another assassinated President rang in their ears. Abraham Lincoln once said, "It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all the time." Not all Americans believed the Commission. They refused to be "fooled." The Warren Commission supposedly closed the book on the Kennedy case. But critics of their official report were about to bust it wide open.

Immediately, questions flew around the country. Where was the *proof* that Oswald acted alone? Didn't his strange life, full of Cuban and Soviet connections, suggest that someone else might have planned the assassination with him? And what about the evidence itself? Was it really that "open and shut" a case? The first wave of critics pointed



Dealey Plaza, site of the assasination, and the bullet trajectories determined by the Warren Commission, as well



Y PLAZA SHOWING KNOWN AND SUSPECTED
T PATHS FIRED AT KENNEDY'S MOVING CAR

as others suggested by conspiracy theorists and ballistics experts.

out the flaws in the Warren Report. *Whitewash*, by Harold Weisberg; *Rush to Judgement*, by Mark Lane; *Accessories After the Fact*, by Sylvia Meagher; and *Six Seconds in Dallas*, by Josiah Thompson all took serious issue with the Warren Commission. They pointed to evidence that the Commission left out. Their questions and criticisms made the Warren Report look sloppy at best. Maybe Oswald, acting alone, had shot Kennedy after all. But the Commission had not done a thorough job of proving it.

What were the problems with the official report? There were *lots* of them! For example, several people identified Lee Harvey Oswald as the man in the sixth floor window. But what about almost fifty witnesses who heard shots from the grassy knoll area *in front of* the motorcade? Several saw smoke rise from behind the fence on the knoll. Others saw a man running away after the shooting. Remember those Secret Service men who stopped people, including Dallas police, from running up the knoll? It turns out that all Secret Service agents were accounted for at that moment. *None* of them were on the knoll! Who were those men with badges? Were they helping the assassin make his getaway?

What about that rifle? When Deputy Weitzman first found the gun he identified it as a German Mauser. Weitzman was a man who really knew about guns. The Mannlicher-Carcano had *Made in Italy* stamped right on the top. How could Weitzman mistake it for a German-made gun?

Could there have been two rifles found? Some

witnesses *did* report seeing two men in that sixth floor window. If Oswald had time to escape from the Depository before it was sealed, why couldn't someone else? If so, what became of the German Mauser, if there was one? Was it hidden by the police or the FBI *after* they found it to conceal the fact of a second gunman? The ugly word *conspiracy* began to spread through the nation. What kind of conspiracy? Cuban? Soviet? Oswald, after all, had connections to both.

Why would the government hide that information? Some people theorized that if the American people thought that the Cubans or the Soviets were involved, there might be an uprising! People might want to fight back and it could lead to World War III! Some people thought that the Warren Commission's *real* job was to lead the Americans off the trail of conspiracy in order to keep the nation secure. If so, maybe the Warren Report included only the evidence that would point to Oswald as the lone gunman. Was the Commission established to calm an upset America and avoid war at all costs—even if that meant lying to the entire world? Or were they protecting something else entirely?

Then there was Oswald's interrogation. It is standard procedure to take notes or tape-record the questionings. So why didn't Police Captain Fritz keep records of these sessions with Oswald? He claims that Oswald just denied everything, so why record that? But how could he know that ahead of time? Can we believe that in twelve hours of heavy questioning, Oswald didn't even give us a

clue? Maybe Oswald did offer some leads . . . leads the government didn't want the American public to follow. Did some top official order the Dallas police to destroy the records?

There's more. One of the most controversial pieces of evidence was the autopsy report. The June 1964 Warren Report autopsy records differed from the ones reported earlier that year in *The New York Times*. There was confusion about where the President's wounds were, *exactly*. That's important information when you try to trace the path of a bullet. Reports and X-rays seemed to keep disappearing and resurfacing. Did someone alter the autopsy records to be sure it looked as if Kennedy was shot from behind?

Maybe a wound showed that the President was hit from the front. That means the shot couldn't have come from the Depository. So now the trail leaves Oswald. It heads in another direction. Back up the grassy knoll perhaps, toward a second gunman.

Did the single bullet theory really make sense? How could one bullet zigzag to cause so many wounds and yet be barely damaged? When a bullet hits bone and body tissue, it deforms. After passing through two bodies, this bullet should have been very damaged. Yet, it looked practically new. It was nicknamed "the pristine bullet."

The single bullet theory got a new name. Now it was called "the magic bullet theory." Few believed in that bullet's strange magic.

One question led to another. There were new

questions about means, method, and motive—not just Oswald's . . . but the Warren Commission's.

Some people thought the Commission didn't intend to cover up anything at all. They were just under too much pressure to get the job done quickly and satisfy the American public with some answers. So, they did a rush job.

Others gravely shook their heads. The Commission, or someone, was covering up the truth. There were just too many holes in its explanation. People also started to point fingers at the *members* of the Warren Commission. One of them was Alan Dulles. He was the former head of the CIA. He had been *fired* by Kennedy. And remember the Bay of Pigs? Alan Dulles had been one of the people responsible for planning it, making Kennedy furious.

Other questions were raised about the investigating agencies themselves. The Commission called into question the performance of the Secret Service, the CIA, and the FBI, asking them to investigate themselves. But think about that a moment. When you make a *big* mistake, isn't your first impulse to try to cover it up? The FBI and the CIA are made up of people just like you and me. Did they cover it up, too?

In 1970, critics got a new chance to solve the mystery. A law was passed called the Freedom of Information Act. This act entitled American citizens to request to see certain government records that had been closed to the public before. Critics of the Warren Commission were back on the trail of the assassin.

Conspiracy

The trail had thorns and bristles everywhere. The plot got muddier with every turn—especially when it came to the CIA. In 1975, a Senate Intelligence Committee was formed to investigate foreign assassinations. It came out that in 1963, the CIA had hired Mafia hit men Sam Giancana and John Roselli to assassinate Fidel Castro. Rumors flew that the mobsters also had information about the assassination of JFK. But both men were killed, probably by other mobsters, before they could be questioned about it.

Suddenly, our view of the CIA was dark and shadowy. How long had the CIA been linked with organized crime? What was it really up to? Remember that the CIA was very angry at Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs incident. At one time Kennedy had wanted to disband the CIA entirely. Could Kennedy's actions against the CIA be a motive for its members to plot against him?

The CIA was not the only organization casting a dark shadow. The FBI had made serious mistakes before and after Kennedy's death. After Oswald returned from the Soviet Union in 1962, he was assigned to Dallas FBI agent James Hosty. Hosty was supposed to monitor Oswald's activities. Lee was considered a possible threat to American society. Hosty never spoke with Oswald directly. But he did interview his wife Marina twice. This made Oswald very angry. Hosty received threatening notes from Oswald just weeks before the assassination. Hosty knew that Oswald had a job in the Texas School Book Depository, a building that the President would be driving by. Yet no one watched over Oswald the day that JFK came to Dallas. Why not? Had the FBI made a fatal mistake, or was the "accident" partly intentional? FBI director J. Edgar Hoover ordered that this information be covered up. Was he trying to protect the image of the FBI? Or was he hiding something far more sinister?

The connections get even more tangled. Remember Kennedy's war on organized crime? It made the Mafia furious. These gangsters certainly had the means, method, and motive to commit murder. Guess who were their friends? None other than Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby!

New information created new motives. There were more possibilities for conspiracy. Lee Harvey Oswald seemed to be linked to every suspect—Cuba, the Soviet Union, the Mafia, the CIA, and the FBI. Was he working for one—or even several—organizations? A 1976 survey reported that

80 percent of Americans *didn't* believe Oswald acted alone.

That haunting question—Who shot JFK?—continued to spook the American people. It was time for another official investigation. The House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) was established in 1976 to investigate the shooting of President Kennedy and the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King.

The HSCA poured through the mountains of evidence on Kennedy's murder. They set up reenactments of the shooting to see if the single bullet theory really made sense. They listened to witness testimony. They studied autopsy records. Still, after a year and a half of investigating, the HSCA concluded that Oswald acted alone.

Case closed? Not a chance. Just as these congressmen were about to close the case, a new piece of evidence appeared. Back in 1963 a Dallas police escort made an historic mistake. Without knowing it, he left his motorcycle microphone on during the motorcade. The sounds that came through the microphone were recorded on a dictabelt at police headquarters. A dictabelt recording is like a "sound fingerprint." It captures sounds and echo patterns. Critics said the recording had *more* than three gunshots on it. But only three shots were fired from the Mannlicher-Carcano. Where did the other shots come from? Were these extra sounds really gunshots at all?

A reenactment was in order. Congress hired acoustic experts. They set up microphones around

Dealey Plaza. Marksmen fired guns from the sixth floor and the grassy knoll. They tape-recorded several shooting sequences. Would they get a match between the sound patterns on one of their recordings and the original dictabelt? Would they have proof that more than three shots were fired?

Acoustical experts listened to the tapes. Half of them thought there were shots from the grassy knoll, half thought there weren't. It was a tie. Still, no positive proof. The HSCA was ready to close the case again, with a no conspiracy verdict.

But Chief Counsel Blakey decided to get just two more opinions from acoustic experts. Would Mark Weiss and Ernest Aschkenasy tip the scales in one direction or the other? Or would one say yes and one say no, splitting the vote? They both testified that they were 95 percent sure that a shot came from the grassy knoll! Would the HSCA change the decision it had taken two years to reach?

In 1979, the House Select Committee on Assassinations gave its final verdict. The assassination of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963, was probably a conspiracy. However, the Secret Service, the CIA, and the FBI, as agencies, were not involved in the assassination. Then the HSCA solemnly closed the book.

But, of course, critics stuck their hands back between the pages and opened it again. Word spread like wildfire. A government committee had declared conspiracy! There *was* a fourth shot, from the grassy knoll. So, at least two gunmen, working

together, fired at the President in Dallas. The question passed across the lips of America yet again—who *really* shot JFK?

Rumors and theories spread. Many Americans felt they could no longer trust their own government. A nasty picture was sketched in the minds of United States citizens. It painted a government working with Mafia hit men, a CIA experienced in assassinations, and an FBI that cared more about its own image than the truth. The portrait of a government that led the nation toward a healthy society, that led the world toward freedom and peace, seemed buried with John Kennedy.

Conspiracy, by Anthony Summers, and *Best Evidence*, by David Lifton, 1980; *The Plot to Kill the President*, by G. Robert Blakey and Richard Billings, 1981; *Reasonable Doubt*, by Henry Hurt, 1986; *Mafia Kingfish*, by John Davis, *Contract on America*, by David Scheim, and *On the Trail of the Assassins*, by Jim Garrison, 1988; *High Treason*, by Robert Groden and Harrison Livingstone, 1989; *Plausible Denial*, by Mark Lane, 1991, were just *some* of the books that answered the question—Who shot JFK? As you can see, there are enough versions of the conspiracy to keep you reading until you're a grandparent. The problem is, which theory, if any, is right?

None of these books was able to *prove* its theory. Each relies, at least partly on, **circumstantial evidence.** These are bits of information that seem related to each other and to the assassination. But maybe they're not. For example, let's take the fact that Oswald and his Russian wife were able to get

out of Russia just a few days after they requested exit visas. In 1962 it was very difficult for anyone, especially a Russian-born citizen, to leave that country. And yet Lee and Marina had no trouble at all. The State Department even paid their way! Authorities normally question someone who enters the United States from Russia, especially an American who had defected saying he hated the United States. He could be returning as a Russian spy. Yet, no one debriefed Oswald. Why not? Did he have secret government connections that allowed him to slip back in?

Critics of the Warren Report take information like that and link it with other facts. The chain they make creates their theory, but it's not fact.

The Dictabelt recording seemed to prove, beyond any reasonable doubt, that there was a second gunman. So, conspiracy was a fact. All that seemed left to do was prove who was behind it. But another turn in the trail came from Steve Barber. Steve was a rock drummer in a small Ohio town. He bought *Gallery Magazine*'s July 1979 special issue on the Kennedy assassination. In it was a paper record of the dictabelt recording. Steve was really into sound. He played the record again and again. He heard something that all the experts had missed. It began, "Hold everything secure . . ." That was the faint voice of Dallas Sheriff Decker in the background.

The police microphone was stuck open on Channel One. Sheriff Decker was talking on Channel Two. Somehow the microphone picked up his channel also. That's called **cross talk.** It hap-

pens sometimes. But Decker gave his orders a full minute and a half *after* the shooting was over! Now it seemed that the sounds the open microphone picked up weren't gunshots at all.

Still, some experts said that a recording mix-up on the dictabelt caused the cross talk. And what about the sound fingerprint the HSCA had made in Dealey Plaza. They *had* duplicated the sound patterns on the dictabelt by firing guns from the Depository and the grassy knoll. That seemed like evidence of gunshots. But the case for a second gunman was suddenly cloudy once again.

If there was no second gunman, we're back to the single bullet theory. Was it "magic" or reality? When we left the magic bullet back in chapter six, it had just hit Governor Connally's leg. But that's not where doctors found it. It was discovered by Parkland Memorial Hospital employee Darrell Tomlinson. The Warren Report tells us that Tomlinson found the bullet on Connally's stretcher. Apparently, it had fallen out of the governor's clothes.

But Tomlinson claims he told the Warren Commission something different. He claims that the bullet was found on another stretcher in the emergency ward, one that carried neither Kennedy nor Connally. This led critics to believe that someone planted the bullet to make it look like a piece of evidence, but that really, it never hit anyone. But the Warren Commission says that Tomlinson was simply mistaken.

Certainly, the bullet looked like it hardly hit anything. Dr. Robert Shaw was the surgeon who

operated on Connally's chest at Parkland. He claims that he never saw a bullet cause so much bony damage and still look so new. But if a bullet is moving slowly it hits bone with less force. Then it's not as likely to be deformed. Some experts say that the bullet slowed down a lot as it passed through Kennedy's body. That could explain why it was so pristine.

There's certainly no clear answer there. Let's take another route in our questioning. Did the stretcher bullet match the bullet fragments removed from Governor Connally's wrist? Dr. Vincent Guinn used a process called neutron analysis to find out. He found out that the fragments had the same chemical makeup as the bullet. But so could other bullets manufactured at the same time. So now what do we know?

Nothing for sure. It does seem likely, though, that the stretcher bullet is the same one that hit Connally. It *doesn't* tell us whether that bullet hit Kennedy. It does tell us that the bullet was probably not just put on the stretcher to confuse everyone and lead us off the trail of the assassin. But the key word here is *probably*. The evidence *points* toward the single bullet theory. The theory in turn, points to Oswald. But it *proves* nothing. Even if Oswald is the only one who fired shots, that doesn't prove that no one plotted with him.

As for the peculiar path of the bullet, well, that's possible, too. If the President was leaning downward just a little, and the governor was leaning back just a little, you can trace a path back through them to the sixth floor window.

What about all those witnesses who heard shots from the grassy knoll? Dealey Plaza is a strange place. Buildings around the plaza create a vast echo chamber. Maybe the sounds from the knoll were just the frightening echoes of Oswald's rifle?

Unfortunately, things get more confusing from here. There's the problem of the autopsy to think about. It all seems to start with Dr. James Humes. He was the doctor placed in charge of the autopsy at Bethesda. This was his first autopsy involving gunshot wounds. There were several things he neglected to do. First, he didn't examine the President's clothes. That's important when you're trying to figure out about entry and exit wounds. The direction of the fibers around the bullet hole tells you whether the bullet was going in or coming out. Dr. Humes's description of the wounds and his drawings were not accurate.

Remember that Dr. Perry had operated on Kennedy's throat in Dallas. Because of the operation, Dr. Humes didn't realize there had been an injury there. So he didn't attempt to trace the path of the bullet through the body. That also could have told us which way the bullet was going. Finally, Dr. Humes burned his original autopsy notes before they were released to the public.

The autopsy was inaccurate. What might have been scientific proof of the single bullet theory, or of conspiracy, was just another piece that didn't quite fit in any one puzzle. What's more, the Bethesda autopsy drawings didn't match the Parkland Memorial Hospital drawings. The size,

location and nature of the wounds seemed to have changed.

Finally, in 1988, this conflict seemed to be resolved. On November 15, PBS broadcasted a *Nova* program called "Who Shot President Kennedy?" The original autopsy doctors refused to be interviewed for the program. But four doctors from Dallas went to the National Archives in Washington and examined the autopsy photos. *Nova* had gotten special permission from the Kennedy family for the doctors to study the fifty-two photographs.

Before each doctor looked at the photos, he described Kennedy's wounds as he remembered seeing them in Dallas. Then, all four doctors took all the time they needed to study the photos. No TV cameras were allowed in the room. After almost an hour of study, they each agreed that there was no difference between the wounds they saw in Dallas, and what they saw in the autopsy photos.

Until the *Nova* show these same doctors thought that the President's wounds were somehow changed at the autopsy to confuse the public. But that was before they saw the photos from the National Archives. These results proved nothing. But they did cast doubt on the conspiracy theory that used the "faked" autopsy records as its main argument.

But there were plenty of other arguments for conspiracy, like the mysterious deaths of over twenty key witnesses. In a relatively short time,

many people with interesting testimony about the shooting died. Was this just a strange twist of fate? How important were these people who disappeared one by one?

Remember Sam Giancana and John Roselli? They were the mobsters who were hired by the CIA to assassinate Fidel Castro. They testified about *that* plot to the Senate Intelligence Committee. But they didn't live to testify before the HSCA.

Deputy Sheriff Buddy Walthers was another. He found a bullet in the grass on Elm Street after the shooting. He turned it over to a man who said he was with the FBI. The bullet, however, was never seen again. Neither was the "FBI" man. Later Walthers was killed in a police shoot-out.

Then there was Congressman T. Hale Boggs. He was one of the seven Warren Commission members. Back in 1964 he told people that he had strong doubts about the single bullet theory. Later, in a 1971 speech, he also claimed that the FBI put heavy pressure on Commission members to declare Oswald the lone assassin. Boggs disappeared a short time later on a flight to Alaska. He was never seen again.

Lee Bowers, Jr. worked in the railroad control tower behind the knoll in Dealey Plaza. He said he saw a puff of smoke on the knoll during the shooting. He also saw two men behind the fence on the knoll. One of the men matched the description that bystander Julia Mercer gave of a man *she* saw on the knoll before the shooting. The man Julia Mercer saw was carrying a rifle case. But

her testimony was not even included in the Warren Report.

What happened to Bowers? He died in a one-car accident. He never found out that when acoustic experts listened to the dictabelt recording they determined that a shot came from the very spot on the knoll where Bowers spotted a suspect.

William Whaley was also a car accident victim. Whaley was the cab driver who allegedly picked up Oswald in downtown Dallas after the assassination. Did he hear Oswald say something right after the shooting that might have been a clue in this mystery? Or maybe Oswald never really got in his cab after all. . . . Whaley was the first Dallas cab driver to be killed while on duty in almost thirty years. He died in a mysterious one-car accident.

We can't leave out David Ferrie. He appeared to have links to the CIA, Jack Ruby, Lee Harvey Oswald, and Mafia king Carlos Marcello. In fact, Ferrie was the pilot who flew Marcello back into the United States after Robert Kennedy deported him to Guatemala. Marcello often talked about JFK. He told more than one mobster to "get the stone out of my shoe." Did Marcello arrange for Oswald to take out that "stone"? David Ferrie was supposedly arrested right after the assassination. He was held as a suspect, but was soon released.

Later, Ferrie surfaced again as a critical witness in the case New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison brought against businessman Clay Shaw. Garrison accused Shaw of conspiring with the Mafia and anti-Castro exiles to kill President

Kennedy. According to Garrison, Ferrie agreed to testify. But he died a few days before the trial. Garrison lost his case. Shaw was found innocent of conspiracy.

There was one other case brought to trial that related to the Kennedy assassination. It involved Victor Marquette. Marquette was a high official in the CIA. After he left the organization he wrote an article that was printed in a newspaper. Marquette said that E. Howard Hunt and other CIA officials killed JFK. Hunt filed a lawsuit against the newspaper for printing what Marquette said. There was a two-week trial. The jury voted in favor of the newspaper. Leslie Armstrong, forewoman of the jury, said that once she heard all the evidence, she was convinced that the CIA had killed President Kennedy.

Back to the "mysterious" deaths. The first death was of the most important witness of all—Lee Harvey Oswald. We never *did* hear *his* story. Would he have "cracked" under the pressure of a trial and admitted to the shooting? Would he have named anyone else as an accomplice? Who were the associates who might have worked with him?

More than once, Oswald was seen in the streets of Dallas with David Ferrie and ex-FBI man Guy Banister. In fact, for a while, they all worked in the same office building. James Wilcott also knew Oswald. Wilcott was with the CIA for nine years. He testified to the HSCA in 1978 that he believed Oswald was a CIA agent in Russia. Does it mean that the CIA was involved in the assassination?

Oswald certainly seemed to be a man with many faces. He had ordered his rifle under the name A.J. Hidell. He registered at his rooming house as O.H. Lee. Then there was the case of Leon Oswald. On September 26, 1963, we're told that Oswald was on Trailways Bus #5121 headed for Mexico City.

On that same day, three men visited the Dallas home of Cuban-born Sylvia Odio. They thought she might help other anti-Castro Cubans. Two of the men were Cuban themselves, but one was American. His name was Leon Oswald. Leon talked to Odio about the Bay of Pigs incident. He hinted that he was prepared to kill Kennedy for letting the Cuban exiles down. Eight weeks later, when Odio saw Lee Harvey Oswald in the news, she was *sure* he was Leon Oswald.

What about the Oswald who was in Mexico City on September 26? Descriptions of that man don't match the Oswald we see on footage of the assassination. There were other strange Oswald sightings. Waitress Mary Lawrence saw Jack Ruby in a Dallas restaurant the night before the assassination. He was joined by a young man. After the shooting she told the FBI she thought the man was Oswald. But the Warren Commission said Oswald and Ruby didn't know each other.

Oswald certainly seems to be a major piece in the assassination puzzle. But according to him, he was just a "patsy." This means he was duped. He was the victim of someone else's plot. Oliver Stone's 1991 movie, *JFK*, creates a vivid picture

of this possibility. Oswald had so many political connections it makes him *look* guilty. Stone believes a trail of evidence was created to lead to Oswald. The real gunmen escaped from Dealey Plaza. Other figures in the conspiracy destroyed real evidence and planted fake clues.

Is there any evidence to support Stone's movie? Some. But then again, there's so much evidence in this case, you could use parts of it to support nearly *any* theory.

Is your head spinning? Hold on, because there's more. Take the photographs of Oswald taken weeks before the assassination. They show Lee proudly holding his rifle, pistol, and pro-Cuba leaflets. These were used as evidence that Lee owned both murder weapons.

But there seems to be something wrong with these pictures. The shadows on Oswald's face show that the sun was directly overhead at the time the photo was taken. But shadows on the ground, from Oswald's body and other objects, cast long shadows. Long shadows occur later in the day. The shadows don't match up. Was a photo of Oswald's head carefully put on a photo of someone else's body to make Oswald look guilty? The photos look like evidence that Oswald really was a patsy.

If Oswald didn't shoot Kennedy, then why did he shoot Tippit? Nobody shoots a policeman who just asks to talk to him . . . not unless he's guilty of a serious crime. But some witnesses say that the man who shot Tippit didn't look like Oswald at all.

Assassination Trail Map

As you can see, "Who Shot JFK?" is one of the most confusing questions you can ask. The more you learn about it, the less you seem to know. You've heard a lot of evidence and a lot of theories. You're almost ready to make your own decision. Was Oswald acting alone? Or was Oswald conspiring with others? If so, with whom? Maybe it wasn't Oswald at all? Before you hand in your verdict, let's go over a few facts and controversial points.

- ***How many shots were fired?***

No one knows for sure. The Warren Commission said three shots were fired from the Texas School Book Depository. The HSCA said at least four shots were fired, including at least one from the

grassy knoll. They used the dictabelt recording to determine this. Today, the dictabelt evidence is in question. Still, witnesses agree that they heard shots from the knoll. Yet there is no scientific proof of more than three shots.

- ***Could the Mannlicher-Carcano be aimed and fired in that short a time period?***

Yes. If the first bullet was already loaded in the firing chamber, ready to shoot, Oswald had enough time to fire three shots. He was probably a good enough marksman to aim and hit his target. In Marine Corps firing tests, he qualified once as a good shot, another time as an average shot. Experts say the range between the sixth floor window and the motorcade was an easy shot. Bullet fragments and casings lead back to the Mannlicher-Carcano. Fingerprints, nitrate powder on Oswald's hands, and the rifle itself all lead to Oswald.

- ***Is the single bullet theory a possibility?***

Yes, it is. The "magic bullet" found in the hospital weighed 158.6 grains. An unused Mannlicher-Carcano bullet weighs 160 to 161 grains. Do a little math. You'll see that only about 2 grains were missing from the bullet. Two tiny bullet fragments were recovered from Governor Connal-

ly's wrist. Tests showed that they matched the stretcher bullet.

Governor Connally was turning when the bullet hit him. So the bullet struck him on an angle. Because of his position, and Kennedy's at that moment, experts say the bullet could have hit Kennedy and Connally just the way the Warren Report said it did. Some experts also say the bullet *could* have caused those wounds yet been hardly distorted. Others disagree.

- ***Were the autopsy reports faked?***

The HSCA had the autopsy X-rays and photos scientifically analyzed. They were compared with Kennedy's dental X-rays. This was done to see if both sets of X-rays were of the same person. They were. Nine medical specialists examined the reports. Eight of them agreed that all the wounds came from shots that hit Kennedy in the back.

The autopsy was done in a Naval hospital. It was controlled by the military. Personnel could have been ordered to cover up evidence. For this reason, people are still suspicious.

- ***Why do people criticize the Warren Report?***

1) The Commission questioned 171 people who were in Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963. Here's what they said: 76 people didn't know where the shots came from; 46 thought shots

came from the Depository; 20 said they heard shots from the grassy knoll; 29 said they thought the shots came from other spots. The Commission thought the most convincing evidence was from the Depository. Critics say the testimony about the knoll can't be ignored. The question of the men on the knoll who said they were Secret Service agents has never been settled.

2) The single bullet theory may be possible. But it seems unlikely to many. It seems like a theory developed to prove what they wanted to believe—that Oswald acted alone.

3) Perhaps the most controversial part of the Warren Report is its statement that Oswald acted alone. As you know, Kennedy's political decisions made him some powerful enemies. Oswald seemed connected to many of them. Many people feel that one or more of these groups was plotting with him.

   Oswald was shot by Jack Ruby right in the police station. This seems suspicious to many people. How could someone manage to commit murder surrounded by policemen? How did Ruby gain access to Oswald with so much police protection present?

- ***If there was a conspiracy, who planned it?***

A lot of evidence points to Oswald. But it points to his associates as well. There are many books

about conspiracy, with many different theories. Here are some of them.

1) Kennedy was shot by anti-Castro Cubans who felt that he deserted their cause after the Bay of Pigs.
2) Kennedy was shot by supporters of Castro.
3) Kennedy was shot by CIA members because of his plans to get rid of the agency.
4) Kennedy was shot by the Mafia because of his war on organized crime. One theory says that the actual shots were fired by French gangsters working with the American Mafia.
5) Kennedy was shot by some combination of anti-Castro Cubans, the CIA, and the Mafia working together.

Some people charge that the authors of conspiracy books are just **sensationalists.** They want to get rich and famous writing about an event that's very emotional for most Americans. Others believe every avenue should be explored. That way, the truth can be recorded in history books.

- ***Do any investigators think that Oswald was a lone gunman?***

Yes. *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: The Reasons Why*, by Albert H. Newman, 1970; *Death of a President*, by William Manchester, 1967; *Ken-*

nedy and Lincoln, by John Lattimer, 1980; and *Conspiracy of One*, by Jim Moore, 1991, all support the lone gunman theory. Some of their versions of the assassination seem just as convincing as some of the conspiracy theories.

With so much evidence pointing in so many directions, how can *anyone* know for sure who shot the President? It's certainly difficult. Yet some people are so sure of one theory while other people are convinced of another.

The Kennedy Legacy

Every theory is made up of a chain of evidence. But what links them together? The human mind. Our thoughts enter the picture from the beginning. No matter how objective we try to be, who we are, what we know, and the beliefs we have about the world all influence how we see a situation.

Let's take a story of something that could happen in *your* life. Let's say you're on the school soccer team. Your team, the Lone Gunmen, is playing in the championship game against the Conspirators. The score is four to four with three minutes left to play.

You're about to kick the ball for the winning goal. Julie Winslow, a star player on the Conspirators, runs in for the kick. Will she steal the ball from you? Members of both teams circle around. There seem to be feet everywhere.

Suddenly, you trip and fall. Julie dives in and kicks the ball back toward their goal. Her team-

mate Sam Martin takes over. Wham! The ball flies right past your goalie and into the net. The Conspirators win the championship.

What went wrong? You were about to kick. How did you manage to trip? Did you just lose your balance? Maybe you fell over one of those many feet around you. You feel kind of bad. But your teammates say, "Hey, it could have happened to anyone." You think, "Yeah, I just had a bad day."

Until another teammate, Dave Alvarez, comes over to you and says, "That was sure unfair. Willie Boynton was a rat to trip you like that!" You're stunned.

"I didn't see Willie trip me," you say.

"Yeah, he did, that's why we lost," Dave replies.

So you begin to wonder about it. You ask other people what they saw. Some people say Willie was right near you—but why would he trip you? He's on your team! Willie and you don't get along too well, that's true. He was pretty upset when you were chosen as team captain. But would he be so mad at you that he'd make the team lose?

Then someone on the Conspirators tells you that they saw Willie talking to Julie before the game. You know that Julie and Willie used to go to the same school in another state. Probably they were just talking about old times—or were they? Maybe they were plotting something. You begin to ask questions of people who know both of them. You find out that Dave Alvarez, who started this whole thing, really likes Lucy Abrams, but Lucy likes Willie. Did Dave make the whole thing up so Lucy would hear it and stop liking Willie?

Then you find out that two high school kids from another town were betting fifty dollars each that the Conspirators would win. One of them, Lorna Macon, knows Julie's cousin Wes. Someone saw Lorna smile at Julie before the game. *Maybe*, Lorna was going to pay Julie some of her winnings. So Julie arranged it with Willie to trip you. Rick Porter tells you that Julie owed him thirteen dollars and Willie owes Karen Baker seven dollars. So both Willie and Julie needed money. The plot thickens.

You start asking questions of everyone. Willie, Julie, and Lorna deny everything. They think you're just being a sore loser. So you begin to wonder about Dave, who started this Willie business in the first place. Everyone's beginning to wonder about you. They think maybe you're a little nuts. . . .

You see how it goes? There are many connections between events and people. Maybe they mean something and maybe they don't. It all depends on how you look at it. If you tend to think that people are sneaky, and you really hate to lose, you'll believe someone tripped you. But if you believe that sometimes people just fall at the worst moments, you'll get a new pair of sneakers with better treads and leave it at that.

Remember—this is a made-up story. Good team spirit and fair play are important values to most people. But it's a long way from the schoolyard to the world of assassination and conspiracy. The relationships between nations and within governments are very hard to understand. In a world of

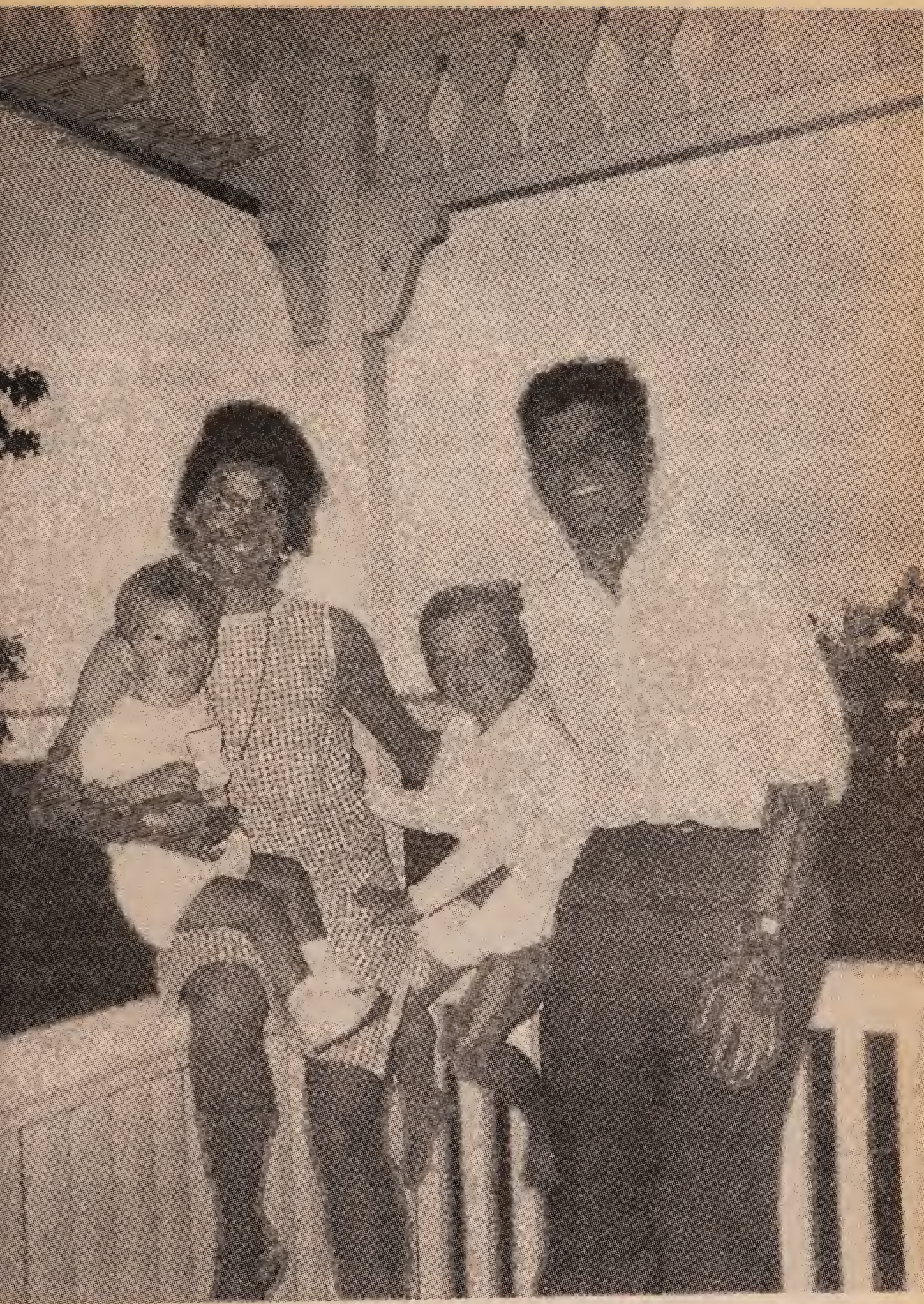
politicians, spies, and organized crime, anything can happen. That includes a lone gunman shooting a president. Or a group plotting together. Such was the world on November 22, 1963.

For some of us, it's easier to believe in a conspiracy. To others, the possibility that government employees would plot against their own President is too awful to consider. It seems more likely that one madman seized an opportunity that no one was prepared for—not even the FBI and Secret Service.

Then there are those of us who stand somewhere in the middle. Maybe the government covered up careless mistakes and embarrassing facts. But does that mean there was an evil plot against the President?

After all these years, and all these investigations, we still have no definite answers. You may wonder why people don't just forget about it. When JFK became President in 1961, he changed the mood of the whole nation. He was a family man, full of energy and ideals. He helped people feel like they could, in some small way, make a difference in the world. That in turn lifted everyone's spirits. John Kennedy had the qualities of a true leader. National polls almost thirty years after his death show that Americans still regard Kennedy as one of the best Presidents in United States history. They wonder about what might have been if Kennedy had lived.

The war in Vietnam escalated after his death. It cost thousands of American lives. Many people feel these lives were wasted in a long drawn-out war



The President, Jackie, and their children share a close moment at Squaw Island the summer before he was killed.
(Courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library)

that we never should have gotten into in the first place. Would Kennedy have prevented the Vietnam tragedy? We'll never know.

In the United States, many citizens are proud of their right to determine the course of history. Whoever shot JFK stole that right from the hands of voters in the 1964 election. So, there's a natural human impulse to hold someone accountable. But who? Even Lee Harvey Oswald was eliminated before we could take him to trial. Many Americans are left with the feeling that justice was never done.

Some historians say that the tragedy surrounding Kennedy's death has made him a hero in our eyes. They say that the real Kennedy had many flaws, that he was deceptive at times, like many politicians. Certainly, John F. Kennedy made mistakes. But he stirred the hearts and imagination of people not just in the United States, but around the world. "In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success of our course . . ." And so it happened that day in Dallas, that the course of history was thrust back in our hands, without the man we had chosen to lead it. One of the things that died with JFK was the American people's confidence in their government.

Since the Kennedy years, we've found out that government has many secrets. Some are necessary, but some hide information that the American public should know.

In 1964, when the Warren Commission members finished the investigation, they did one last

thing. They ordered that their files on the assassination be sealed until the year 2039. Why?

In 1979, when the HSCA finished *its* investigation, it ordered that over eight hundred boxes of materials be sealed until the year 2029. Why? Do both sets of evidence have information that would be embarrassing to certain people in high places . . . or worse?

Americans want to know. Texas Congressman Henry B. Gonzalez plans to introduce a resolution to Congress that calls for the sealed records to be opened now. He's not alone. Ohio Congressman Louis Stokes, a former chairman of the HSCA, also proposes the release of these documents. Will these files give us some answers?

Berbard Fensterwald says there's even more evidence out there. He's the president of a private organization in Washington, D.C., called the Assassination Archives and Research Center. He claims that the FBI still has "massive files" on the assassination. In fact, J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI director in 1963, left orders with his secretary to destroy certain files when he died. Were all the really important assassination files destroyed years ago? Is there anyone still alive who knows the truth?

"I know of at least one man who can tell the truth of how the assassination took place," says Fensterwald. "He is alive and on the government payroll. He knows who Oswald was and what he did and what he didn't do," he adds. Why doesn't this man tell us? "He wants to stay alive," Fensterwald explains.

Maybe the sealed reports won't give us an answer. Yet maybe, some information in one of them will give us an important clue that might lead us back on the assassin's trail. At least, once the documents are made public, we'll feel closer to the truth.

What if the files remain sealed until 2029 and 2039? That's where you come in. Unlike many mysteries, there are clues to this one just waiting to be found. You don't have to do any fancy sleuthing to dig them up. You just have to wait.

When the years 2029 and 2039 roll around, you'll probably be about fifty years old. **You** could be one of the people to find out what's in those files. If you keep asking questions, *you* may be the one to solve the mystery that baffled a century—Who Shot JFK?

Places of Interest

Exhibits About JFK's Assassination

"The Sixth Floor." This exhibit is housed in the famous sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. For information contact the Dallas County Historical Foundation, Dallas County Administration Building, 411 Elm Street, Dallas, Texas 75101-3301. Telephone (214) 653-6666. The exhibit sells an audiotape and videotape about the assassination.

JFK Assassination Research Center, Dallas. The center offers a bus tour around Dealey Plaza highlighting assassination landmarks.

The Museum at the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library, Boston. This is the nation's official memorial to President Kennedy. Dedicated to the living Kennedy, the exhibit includes his Oval Office desk, documents, and a thirty-minute film. The store sells many books on Kennedy's life, along with other souvenirs, including the original *Life* magazine issue that covered the assassination ($5). Contact the Museum Store, John F. Kennedy Library, Columbia Point, Boston, Massachusetts 02125. They'll send you a newsletter and brochure.

Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia. Here is the gravesite of John Kennedy. The eternal flame, lit at Kennedy's funeral, still burns.

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Books

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Pett, Moody, Mulligan and Henshaw. *The torch is passed . . .*, Associated Press, 1964.

The Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1964.

Videos

Four Days in November, produced by Mel Stuart and David Wolper for MGM. This documentary video takes you right back to 1963, before, during, and after the assassination.

The Sixth Floor Exhibit, produced by the Dallas County Historical Foundation. This video discusses the assassination and some of the evidence.

A HISTORY MYSTERY™

WHO SHOT JFK?

On November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was shot to death while riding in a motorcade through Dallas, Texas. The entire world went into mourning and all of America gathered around TV sets to watch the sad ceremonies for a fallen leader. But no one was prepared for the shots that silenced his accused killer forever—and left the nation with troubling unanswered questions.

Over the years, there have been many shocking and disturbing theories, but no one has been able to prove exactly what happened and who was involved in the Kennedy assassination. This book will tell you about information researchers have uncovered that throws serious doubt on the official story of how Kennedy was killed. Read it and decide what you think really happened on one of the darkest days in American history.

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